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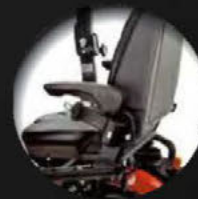
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ON THE COVER**68 CANADIAN MUSIC ICON SAM ROBERTS***Pushes his creativity to a whole new level.***74 URBAN FARMING***Want to have fresh eggs within arms reach?***57 SMALL SPACE?***You don't need an acre to feel like you live on one.***26 THE LANDMARK GROUP** *Our front cover is just one of many breathtaking designs by this award winning team.***STYLE****22 DUNNINGTON GRUB AWARD WINNING LANDSCAPE DESIGN***Go big or go home. And who wouldn't want to call this space home?***30 GET DRESSED** *We all need to do it. Just do it in good ole Canadian style.***DESIGN****38 CARSON ARTHUR** *reveals everything he knows about who's spending their cash and what they're spending it on.***42 DESIGNER PROFILES** *As usual, we bring you four outstanding landscape designers from across the country to inspire and amaze you.***48 HGTV'S PAUL LAFRANCE** *wants you to climb out of that big box you live in and unleash your inner child.***51 RENEW-REUSE-REPURPOSE** *Everything old can really be new again!***61 LANDSCAPE YOUR BALCONY?** *Some awesome products to make condo living feel a little more "natural".***LIVING****74 URBAN FARMING** *is all the rage! Fresh farm eggs at your fingertips.***77 BLOWN AWAY** *A century homestead receives a major facelift and a state-of-the-art sound system.***84 PATIO FARE** *Canada's love affair with food trucks.***90 DRINK** *some of the most exotic tequilas the world has to offer. Sandy MacFadyen is your "go to" guy.***92 ALLERGIES** *Can't live with them, can't live without them. Advice from OL's own naturopathic doctor.***DISCOVER****95 LANDSCAPING 101** *for those who need to be schooled on 'what the heck is that?'***98 OUTDOOR ART** *See what Canadian artists can design for your dreamscape.***102 HOMEGROWN** *Joel Plaskett and Hayley McClean. Music doesn't get any more Canadian than this.***108 BIODEGRADABLE YOU!** *Dying doesn't have to mean you're dead. It can also be the beginning!***112 COMIC RELIEF** *Cuz as fun as outdoor life can be... we all still need a good laugh.***114 NOT SO AVERAGE JOE** *Everyone's got a story!*

106

32

26

36

28

68

80



Don't get caught with your pants down!

Spring has sprung and it's time to establish a plan for your "future" outdoor living space.

A good plan will help you to communicate your needs and expectations with a professional designer in order to establish up front budgets, so that there are no surprises or added cost during construction.

Need some advice on where to plant the perfect tree? Can't decide what style of pool works best for your yard?
Just ask Dave!

Dave Maciulis is a certified landscape designer at Natural Landscape Group, public speaker and all 'round landscape guru with more than 25 years of hands-on experience in the field.

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Terry Hashimoto was born in Winnipeg, MB., and currently lives in Charlottetown, PEI. Talk about extremes! He loves to write technologically based, challenging pieces...game changers, as he calls them.
Boxers or briefs?
Definitely boxers.



Curtis Potter was born and raised in Edmonton, AB. He writes because he simply loves words!
Boxers or briefs?
Both! (That makes for a lot of laundry Curtis.)



Melissa Nezezon was born, raised and still lives in Hamilton, ON. Our little world traveller writes in order to feed her artistic soul. And "artsy" she is!
Boxers or briefs?
Neither! Just go commando ;)



Peter Vogler was born and raised in Vancouver and currently resides in Whistler, BC., which makes him one of the two actual west coast boys you'll ever meet. He loves writing and storytelling as a means of touching that part of us that makes us human.
Boxers or briefs?
Commando! Well played Vogler... well played.



Monique Craig or Moe, as we like to call her, has a passion for many things in life, words being one of them. Her life and business partner, Erik Schrobilgen, create magic together at Valley Antiques in Dundas, ON. *Boxers or briefs?*
Both prefer boxer briefs... Well, that works out well!



Tim Zwart was born and raised in Montgomery, NY and Seymour, TN. "I write for both personal enjoyment and for my children Jax and Skylar without whose love I would cease to be."
Boxers or briefs?
Seriously, does anybody under 60 even wear briefs anymore?



Patrick Dixon was born in Aurora, ON., and now resides in the T-dot. He writes as a form of self expression because his comedy shtick failed... we think he's funny though!
Boxers or briefs?
"Under Armor preferably."



Jon Peter was born in Manitouwadge and raised in Tillsonburg, ON. He writes in order to share his vast knowledge and to promote the proper use of plants in gardens.
Boxers or briefs?
Briefs all the way!!



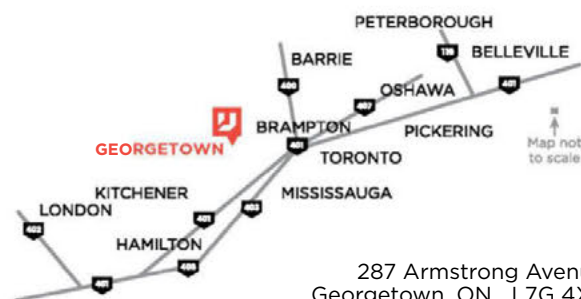
Tim Rivard was born in London, ON., raised in Port Rowan and now resides in Hamilton, ON. He writes to improve the knowledge of the homeowner and ease their experience of the landscape process.
Boxers or briefs?
Hands down...boxers.



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POSITIVE CHANGE

Well now that wasn't so bad was it?! That winter paled in comparison to last year's. I love spring. It means that summer is right around the corner, and the opportunities for growth and new ideas are bubbling just below the surface as the snow shovels give way to garden tools, bbq recipes and outdoor furniture. Spring is the time for change. And change... she is a comin'.

Over the last few years, our magazine has seen a few minor changes, but THIS... is our year for some real and positive change! You will notice that we've made some alterations to the name and, of course, the logo of our fine publication. After much research and thought, it made more sense to change the name in order to reflect and encompass the greater vision that is the outdoor experience. OUTDOOR LIFESTYLE pretty much includes all that we Canadians have the potential to experience throughout all of our crazy

seasons. It has no limits... no boundaries. We hope that you love it as much as we do.

There is a common theme that, so appropriately, threads itself through our spring/summer 2015 issue. And that theme is "change". From your thoughts on how you can change your own outdoor space, to your views on urban farming, we hope that these editorials cause you to make some positive change in your family, your community and the world on a grander scale.

Change is not always easy, but it's always worth the pains of growth. Some of it is out of our control, and in that case all we can do, is change the way we deal with it.

Let's all make a concentrated effort to make this our "year of change" and show our gratitude for the opportunity to make a difference. Where will you start?

D. Maciulis
Dave Maciulis, CLD

*This issue is dedicated to
MELANIE PUDLO,
an energy that embraced life.*

1970-2014

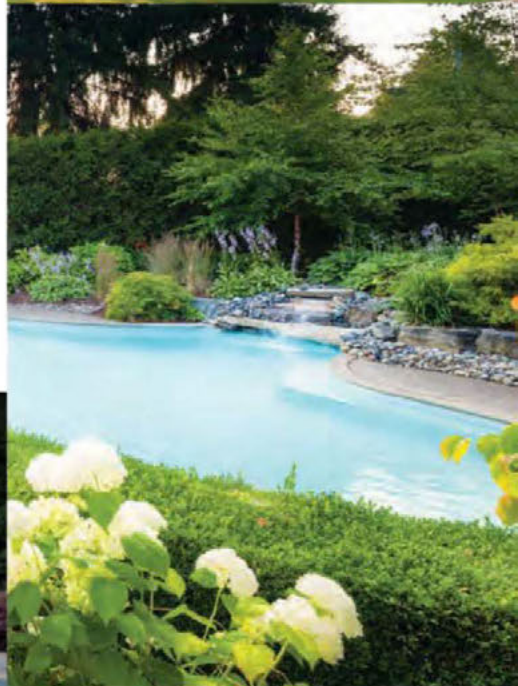
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



I have been a resident of Muskoka for more than 30 years, and before that, came here for summer vacations. You should be aware that there is no such word as 'Muskokas', and it irks we Muskokans to no end to hear the word. There are no areas such as the 'Niagaras' or the 'Haliburtons' either. I was very surprised to see the article in the 2014/2015 issue of your magazine, particularly since Kirby Hall should know better and I would have expected he would correct the writer.

Dave Bolus
Muskoka, ON

OL: Well Dave, there are a lot of things we should all know better about! Let's not lay blame on poor Kirby Hall. It's us...we southern Ontarians tend to romanticize your area. Like "the Hamptons" are to the Americans...so are "the Muskokas" to us. Our apologies if we offended any of our friends in Muskoka!

I just wanted to compliment your magazine on the lengths you go to in order to keep everything as authentically Canadian as possible. From the landscape designers to the fashion article, to the writers and the musicians... I appreciate all of this as a Canadian! Makes me want to show off a little! I think I'll bring a copy on my next trip abroad.

F. Gainsworth
Ottawa, ON

OL: If you've loved our Canadian content so far... Wait 'til you see our next issue!! It's enough to Canadianize even Putin!

I am a student studying landscape design at a local college. I came across your magazine at my neighbourhood Chapters. I noticed the "designers" section and read every word of each designer profile. How inspiring this was to me! I've found a new zest for my studies and, who knows, maybe one day I will be on the pages of this publication and provide inspiration for someone else?! Keep it coming!!

S. Church
Mississauga, ON

OL: Our publication was founded on our desire to, not only promote outdoor lifestyle, but to highlight the designers that create all of the outstanding work you see on the pages of OL Magazine. Glad to know that you can appreciate that! Good luck with your studies. And maybe someday you will grace the pages of OL, who knows?!



LETTER FROM THE OUTDOOR DESIGN/BUILD EDITOR



Remember when you were a kid and people would ask you what you wanted to be when you grew up? Space explorer, dinosaur hunter and super hero were at the top of my list... I remember the patronizing look on the faces of the adults who were asking the question. "Awe, isn't that cute" was the typical response. I personally did NOT think it was cute. For me, these were viable options!

One of the things we lose as we get older is our ability to imagine. We give up our dreams of flying, storm chasing and slaying dragons and are handed a box within which we learn to work and create.

While this way of thinking appears safe to us, it limits us in catastrophic ways. Can you imagine what the world would be like if the Wright brothers hadn't dreamed of flying?

While I understand as an adult (or perhaps "man-child" is more appropriate), why my childhood aspirations were not taken seriously, I am very grateful for my feisty imagination. It was a struggle to maintain it and there were seasons when I thought it was gone forever; but perhaps those seasons were necessary in order for me to realize how precious this element of childhood really is. Not only is imagination critical to exploration and invention, but it is also tied intrinsically to a word that everyone understands... FUN!!

So how does this relate to my work where I spend every day redesigning peoples outdoor spaces? Well, if you watch any episode of one of my shows, you will notice a couple of common themes. Firstly, I routinely think outside of the proverbial box. And secondly, WE HAVE FUN!

I'm not just talking about our zany antics during the building process. Yes, we are always goofing around, but I believe it goes deeper than that. The element of fun was already injected into the project from the moment I sat down to design it. People will often ask me how I come up with my design ideas. My best answer to that question is this...

I do my very best to NOT think like an adult.

Now, don't panic I'm not building my projects the way a seven year old would build a bridge out of Lego. I'm not suggesting that you don't need to know very adult things like proper building practices and codes. Simply stated, I have learned to use my adult knowledge to create whatever the heck I want to create, and to use my whimsical childlike imagination to do so.

The result? Well, you can read about it on page 46.

Enjoy your summer with the spirit of a child.

Paul Lafrance, HGTV STAR

We welcome letters and emails from our readers. Our vision is to explore the needs and challenges of outdoor living and landscaping specific to all Canadian regions, and to captivate your imagination. We are proud Canadians with spectacular landscapes to showcase!

We are a young magazine, and eager to meet your needs and interests. Your input is important to us, so please let us know how we are doing.

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Please be sure to include your name, address and telephone number. Letters and emails may be condensed for publication. Pictures will not be returned.

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Recently, I was commissioned to design a riverbed that would sit in the swale of a client's backyard. He had taken his inspiration from a photo he loved and I was very familiar with the landscape, as I had visited that very region of Japan just a few years prior. During my trip to Japan, I'd seen some amazing landform designs in dry riverbeds. The combination of granite and volcanic rock was outstanding. My dilemma in trying to recreate a vibrant looking riverbed for my client was in sourcing colourful granite as opposed to (the bland) white/beige potato-stone that was laden throughout most of the commercial and residential landscapes in and around Southern Ontario.

Homeowners and contractors alike make use of the common potato-stone for accents and stone mulch... BORING! I love colour! So where does one look to find a product that can add some life to the landscape?

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Toronto, Ont. (January 6, 2015)

*Landscape Ontario Salutes
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The year's best construction, design and maintenance work recognized at Awards of Excellence.

Breathtaking design and master craftsmanship in landscape construction, maintenance and design projects were recognized at Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association's Awards of Excellence Ceremony, held January 6, 2015.

Over 600 industry professionals attended the gala awards presentation held at Toronto's International Plaza Hotel. The Awards ceremony is held in conjunction with Congress, one of North America's largest green industry events.

The winning projects showed the outstanding levels of craftsmanship attained by Ontario's landscape industry. That top-notch technical mastery was matched by stunning and sophisticated landscape design. The evening was hosted by Frank Ferragine of Breakfast Television and CityTV. The Landmark Group of Thornbury received the evening's top honour, The Dunington-Grubb Award, for highest-scoring construction project. Pro-Land Landscape Construction of Brampton received the Casey van Maris Award, and Cedar Springs Landscape Group of Oakville was presented with the Don Salivan Grounds Management Award.

The Awards of Excellence are judged according to specific criteria by industry experts. If no project qualifies in an area, no Award is given.

LANDSCAPE ONTARIO IS PLEASED TO RECOGNIZE THE WINNERS

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 Beyond Landscaping, Toronto
 Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds, Dundas
 Blue Diamond Pools and Landscaping, Barrie
 Bruce Wilson Landscaping Ltd., Kleinburg
 Cedar Springs Landscape Group, Ancaster
 DA Gracey & Associates, Vaughan
 Darsan, North York
 DiMarco Landscape Lighting, Mount Albert
 Dimitriadis Design Build, Sharon
 Earthscape Ontario, Wallenstein
 Elite Designed Concrete Inc., Thornhill
 Fossil Landscapes Ltd., Etobicoke
 Future Lawn Inc., Hanover
 Garden Creations of Ottawa Ltd., Ottawa
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 Genoscape Inc., Markham
 Greentario Landscaping, Hamilton
 Greer Design Group, Dundas
 Griffith Property Services Ltd., Richmond Hill
 Hackstone Landscapes, Maxwell
 Hank Deenen Landscaping Ltd., Toronto
 Ian McGregor Pools & Landscaping, Lynden
 Ideal Landscape Services, Barrie
 Integra Bespoke Lighting Systems, Port Sydney
 Jen-Dan Limited, Gormley
 Kingscape Landscape Construction Group, Richmond Hill
 Landscape Effects Group, Belle River
 Living Architectural Contracting Inc., Ancaster
 MapleRidge Landscapes Ltd., Lynden
 Markville Landscaping & Nurseries Inc., Markham
 Nature's Choice Landscape Construction Ltd., Maple
 Oakridge Landscape Contractors Ltd., Hannon
 Paradisaic Creative Decks, Bowmanville
 Planit Green Landscapes, Ancaster
 Plantenance Landscape Group, Pointe Claire
 Pro-Land Landscape Construction Inc., Brampton
 R J Rogers Landscaping Ltd., Kars
 Royal Stone Landscaping & Design Ltd., Woodbridge
 Shades of Summer Landscaping & Maintenance, Waterdown
 So Green Canada, Toronto
 Tersigni Landscape Construction Inc., Woodbridge
 The Great Garden Revival Company, Mt Albert
 The Landmark Group, Thornbury
 The Scott Wentworth Landscape Group Ltd., Picton
 Tidy Gardens Landscaping Inc., Mississauga
 Vaughan Landscaping, Maple
 Yards Unlimited Landscaping Inc., Ottawa

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

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 Boot's Landscaping & Maintenance Ltd., Richmond Hill
 Cedar Springs Landscape Group, Ancaster
 Clintar Landscape Management, Scarborough
 Clintar Landscape Management, Hornby
 OGS Grounds Maintenance Specialists, Brooklin
 Shades of Summer Landscaping & Maintenance, Waterdown
 Snider Turf & Landscape Care Ltd., Kitchener
 Strathmore Landscape Contractors, Pointe-Claire

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

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 Brydges Landscape Architecture Inc., Guelph
 Cedar Springs Landscape Group, Ancaster
 Earthscape Ontario, Wallenstein
 Gelderman Landscape Services, Waterdown
 Jason Smalley Landscape Design Inc., Ottawa
 Plantenance Landscape Group, Pointe Claire
 Royal Stone Landscaping & Design Ltd., Woodbridge
 The Scott Wentworth Landscape Group Ltd., Picton
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DJ Rain & Co Ltd., North York

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 Lawrence Park Complete Garden Care Ltd., Downsview
 The Gardener Inc., Markham
 The Professional Gardener, Osgoode
 Wright Landscape Services, Bloomingdale

SPECIAL AWARDS

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Sasha Hunter

LEGACY AWARD

Margaret And Ivan Stinson

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

Ken Jewett

PAST PRESIDENTS AWARD 2015

Dean McEllan

FRANK EWALD JR AWARD 2015

Michael Van Dongen

PAST PRESIDENTS AWARD

Upper Canada Stone

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For more information about the Landscape Ontario Awards of Excellence programs, please visit www.loawards.com





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In a rural Ontario setting, rolling hills of crops, naturalized meadows and distant tree lines set the stage for this rural contemporary style home. Clean lines beautifully intersect the topography as the prairie style architecture takes root on a plateau with big sky vistas in all directions.

In keeping with the style of the home, the client desired similar clean lines throughout the landscape, but with the softening textures of meadow plantings and authenticity of natural materials. The result is a stunning and calm rural landscape with multiple destination points, a plethora of amenities, beautiful views, functional spaces, and comfortable microclimates – simply something for everyone.





AWARD
WINNER

THE Landmark Group

BY LORI A. SWEEZEY – DUNDAS, ON

“In creating beautiful spaces, we see and celebrate something bigger and more inspiring than ourselves.”

— Darren Bosch, *The Landmark Group*

Winners of the Dunnington Grubb award for two years running is a pretty impressive feat and a hard act to follow, but it's just another notch on the proverbial belt of landscape design firm The Landmark Group (as seen on our cover).

Their belief that design is intrinsically tied to the human experience is at the heart of all of their designs. “Design is about shaping and helping the human condition. We have a responsibility to help shape the way people live and care for each other... and that has meaning and purpose,” says Landmark designer Darren Bosch. “In a fast paced, high-stakes world, our clients ache for a chance to slow down, relax and play. Our work and craft provides them that chance. Every aspect of a home and outdoor space should be an extension of its inhabitants; reflecting their personalities and possessing a human quality. After all... this is about people connecting with themselves, others and something much bigger.”

The Landmark Group designs appear to engage in a conversation with the surroundings and effortlessly integrate human and home as if they were one and the same. As smooth as butter! Their designs run the gamut... from ultra modern to classic and the end results are breathtaking in every case.

Canadians who spend as much time outdoors as humanly possible during the “not winter” season, want to feel like their outdoor living areas are devoid of seams; each space fluidly extending its hand into the next. The ability to design landscapes that integrate all aspects of the desires and needs of any particular Canadian family is clearly a talent not lost on The Landmark Group.

On a yearly basis, the landscape industry recognizes outstanding work by some very talented people. “It takes a village”... and success can be challenging. But with just the right team of people, who possess just the right amount of passion, commitment and talent... magic happens. And honestly... who doesn't love magic?!

Photo by McNeill Photography

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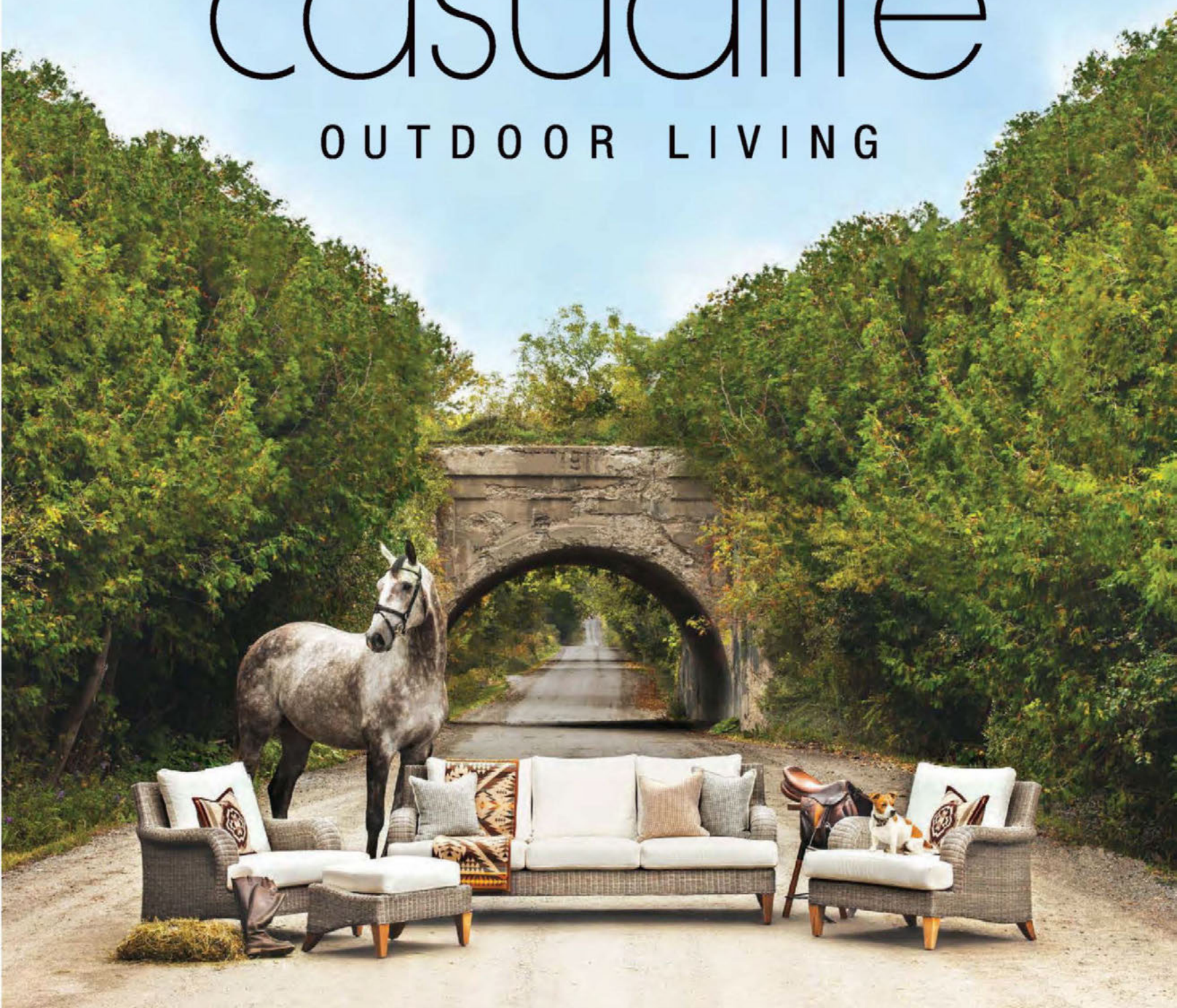
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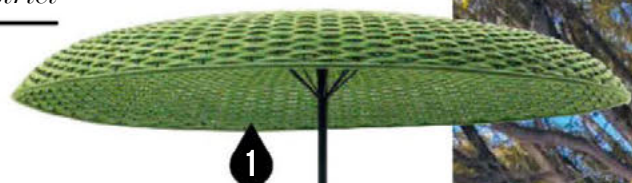
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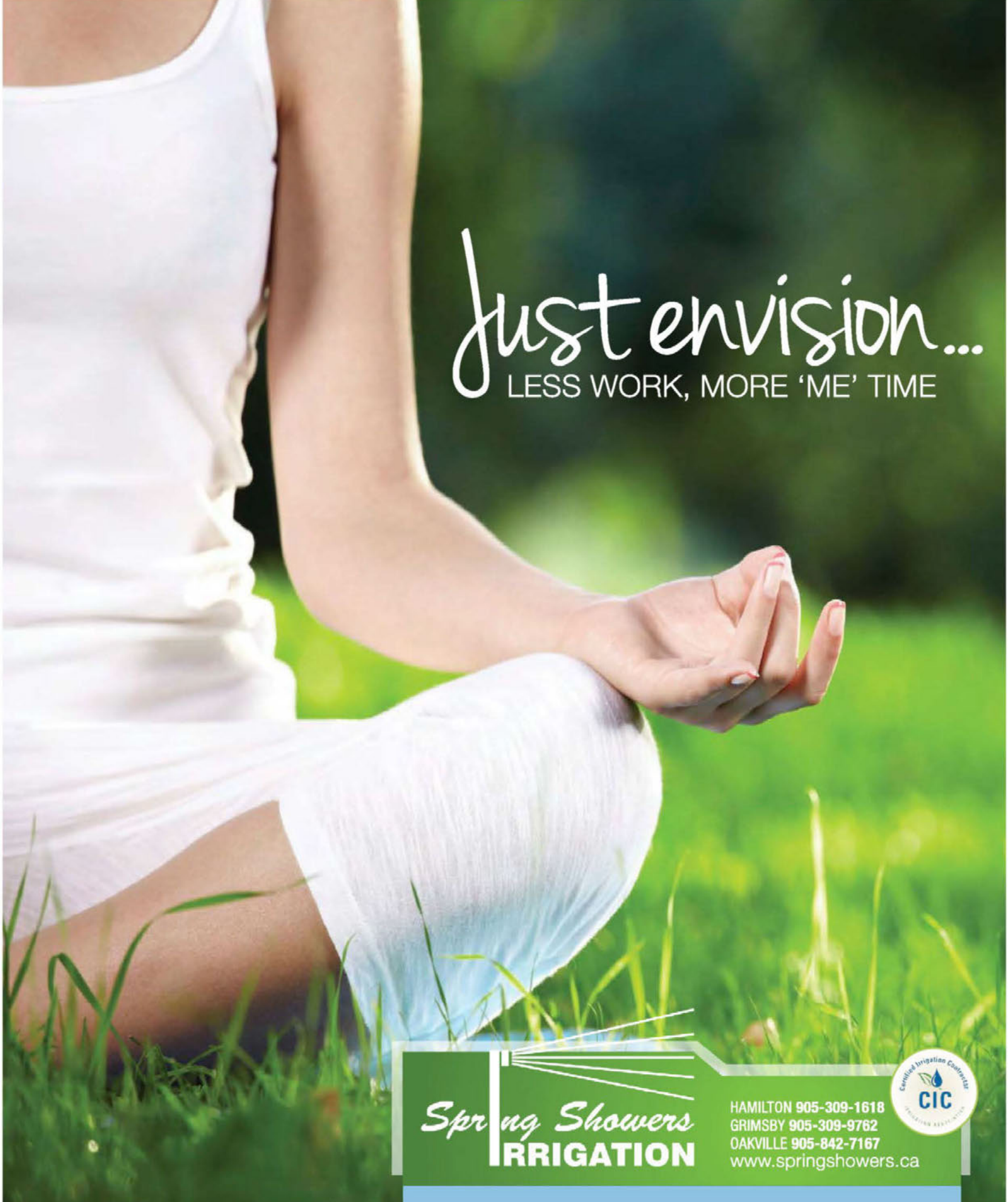


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LANDSCAPING BY NUMBERS

A PORTRAIT PAINTED BY GENERATIONS

BY HGTV STAR CARSON ARTHUR

When creating beautiful outdoor spaces, it ALWAYS comes down to money.

All homeowners have their own unique project priorities, and everybody wants the assurance and peace of mind in knowing that their renovation budget has been well spent. Currently, there are three distinct demographics of home renovators in the market, and each possesses an equally distinct vision and idea for their outdoor spaces. So who is taking the plunge and where are they renovating?

The twenty-three-year-old crowd (called "Millennials"), are buying their first real pieces of property and are looking to customize them. Surprisingly, they are starting with the curb appeal as their priority, and this may be very astute on their part. According to Century 21 Canada, good curb appeal can easily raise a home's value by 7%. These frontyard makeovers are not about outdoor living or entertaining, so much as they are about creating the right character for the home. Millennials place the character of their homes in their top three deciding factors when buying. By investing in this first impression, these Millennials are raising their home value in a way that will continue to increase as their plants and trees grow.

The next demographic is those in their thirties and forties, commonly referred to as the "Generation X" crowd. Even though the Gen Xers are not buying or selling, they are definitely renovating their homes. Their extra money is poured into their yards, used to create original spaces that are family friendly. Big patios with high-end outdoor kitchens are popping up outside Gen X homes, with companies like Appliance Canada supplying these new high-end systems. Turning the backyard into a true oasis (or staycation, as it is commonly referred to) without the long commute is a big investment, but one that is paying huge dividends. Remodeling Magazine, for example, has placed decks and patios in their top value-holding renovations for North America. The ▶

Outdoor living has shown amazing growth in the last few years. With all of the different types of buyers and renovators spending money outside, landscaping is becoming the renewed focus.

It's not about gardening anymore. We are finally looking at the outdoors as a true extension of our homes.



**HOME RENOVATORS
DEMOGRAPHICS**

average deck or patio size continues to increase even though the average size of the Canadian backyard gets smaller, leading to an increase in patio furniture size and the space needed to house it. Larger homes on smaller plots have long been the norm for today's builders.

When it comes to plants and gardening, this generation is in new territory. They want healthy living, and are turning portions of their backyards into vegetable garden plots. The truth is, these homeowners have been reading all of the information about pesticides, chemicals and GMO's for the last 5 years. The idea of "GIY" or "Grow It Yourself" has become mainstream as a result. Maybe Generation X is looking for healthier food to put on their new grills!?

Which brings us to our final renovation demographic: the "Baby Boomers". In their golden years, the Boomers are in transition. They are selling the family home and are 'right-sizing'. As empty nesters, Baby Boomers are happily selling their large homes, banking part of their investment and using the rest to buy

new, smaller and renovate. Now that the children have left home, the Boomers have decided that it's 'me time' and are spending money on their own wish lists. When it comes to the outdoors, Boomers are taking low maintenance to a whole different level. They've realized that yard work is not where they want to be spending their summers. This doesn't mean that they are turning their backs on their love of hobby gardening, it just means that they are now scaling back on how many perennials and shrubs they want in their spaces. Instead, Baby Boomers are focusing on their 'new families': their friends and neighbours around them. Century 21 places this need for community high on the want-list for buyers in their sixties. Like Generation X, Baby Boomers are opting for larger outdoor living areas as extensions of their new, smaller homes. This buying group is willing to sacrifice square footage indoors, as long as they have space outside for hosting guests.

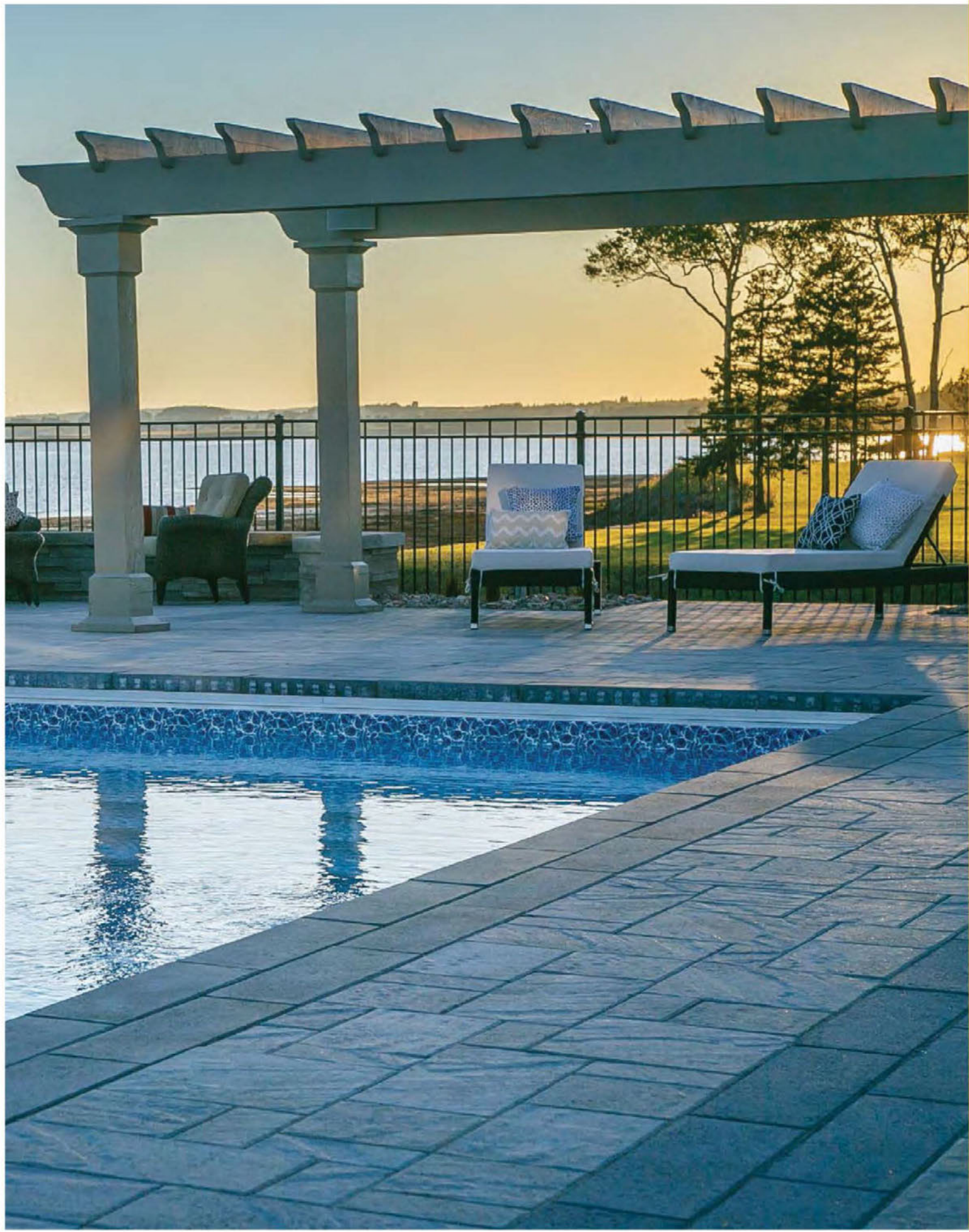


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◀ GUY RICHARDSON

BY TERRY HASHIMOTTO – CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI

The air feels electric in the presence of Landscape Designer Guy Richardson. This ex-marine began his career as a Digital Electrical Technician before love hit his circuit board and brought him to PEI from Orlando, Florida in 1999. Since then, he's become a big deal on the local landscape scene.

Sipping on a double espresso at Zen's in Stratford, Richardson concisely explains his art form and the logic behind every step in his design philosophy. "Landscaping is the groom and your home is the bride," he suggests, and following along the trail of romance, he further adds: "Plants should hold hands, but not hug." He continues by laying out his strategy for each of the design elements that he feels so passionately about. Having subtle paths and gentle approaches all highlighted by the natural foliage of the region, and accented by just a touch of foreign influences – almost like life itself, helps to pave the way for the inspiration of Richardson's creations.

By taking the time to actually "test" how plant species will react in the PEI climate, Richardson meticulously plans out each design so that each collaboration between homeowner and designer appears uniquely different for every season. Like the sand dunes in their natural habitat on the shores of PEI... always majestic and always flowing; a perfect fit for the space.

To achieve this, each Guy Richardson design begins with a detailed interview. "We have to understand the needs and design

tastes of each client and everyone within that household, as well as, what level of maintenance each family member is willing or able to handle. We then compile all that information into one uniform design configuration". This acute attention to the client's needs plays a huge role in Richardson's landscaping success.

Equally as important to Richardson's success is his vast knowledge of plants best suited for the PEI area, and which plants will interact well with those specially brought in to enhance specific design features. He explains, "My designs are more like an "organic being"... something that is constantly changing." His portfolio is impressive; each design springing to life from a camera's digital memory. Before the interview is over, Richardson shares with me his favourite designs on his website. He is a man with incredible talent and passion for his life's work.

After the interview, while sipping on a pint at a local pub, I notice an imported Japanese tree accentuating a newly appointed courtyard. It's subtle beauty and design style looks very familiar to me. Then I realize... I had seen this work of art earlier in Richardson's portfolio. A painstakingly signature look, and one that has his energy all over it. And in true appreciation of PEI's natural beauty, subtly married together with Richardson's version of a gentle outsider.

Richardson's work is a "must see".



HAIG SEFERIAN

BY TIM ZWART – ACTON, ON

Sometimes in life we are lucky enough to come across exceptional individuals who truly inspire us. This inspiration could take on many forms (business, relationships, moral teachings, etc), but what is true about all of these figures is one very basic, but very important, ingredient: PASSION. If you have never been fortunate enough to see true passion in the eyes of an artist doing what he loves, then allow me to introduce you to Haig Seferian; for he is passion personified.

As a child, Seferian had a difficult time recognizing his life's calling. He loved drawing and working with his hands, but was unsure how to turn this hobby into a career. Nothing about traditional schoolwork excited him, and it was becoming abundantly clear to both himself and his parents that his creativity needed a productive outlet. While mulling over potential career paths one day, Seferian came across an interesting course he had never heard of before: Landscape Architecture. This was the 80s, long before this was a trendy career choice. Intrigued by the possibility, he applied to *one* program at *one* university: Landscape Architecture at the University of Guelph, and gained admittance with relative ease. The rest as they say is history, right? Well not so fast...

After a year at Guelph, Seferian started to become complacent and unmotivated. He spent countless days and nights searching his soul wondering, *what am I doing here? Is this really what I want to do*

with the rest of my life? He needed motivation and assurance quickly, and found it in the most unlikely of places: Pomona, California. Deciding that a change of scenery was in order, he transferred to Cal Poly University, where things really began to "click" for him. He spent countless hours volunteering at the offices of his favorite professors, soaking up as much information as they could provide. Upon returning to Ontario, a local landscape design/build firm named Aldershot Landscape Contractors decided to take a chance on him, and for the next 12 years it was where Seferian called home.

It was upon this foundation that he built his reputation and portfolio, eventually using these tools to found Seferian Design Group. These days, the man running the show at one of the nation's premier Design firms bares only a passing resemblance to the confused adolescent of years past. He remains humble and grounded, bounding out of bed in the morning with the enthusiasm and vigor of a kitten attacking a ball of yarn. Outdoor design may be his career, but his calling lies in giving back to local communities, engaging in community projects, and educating the next generation of Landscape Architects to follow him. The best piece of advice he can give to young up-and-comers? "Don't ever get caught up in the trends of the day; incorporating the concepts of classical design will ensure that your projects stand the test of time."



MIKE DALL'ACQUA

BY PATRICK DIXON – RICHMOND HILL, ON

For Mike Dall'Acqua, the lure of landscaping began at childhood. Born to Aldo and Patricia in March of 1985, Dall'Acqua learned the value of hard work at a very young age, and his parents served as a shining example of perseverance and commitment. It was his father's passion for building in particular, says the King City, Ontario native, which inspired him to pursue landscaping as his livelihood. "Some people are born to be hockey players, some are born to be artists, and some are born to be musicians", he says, "I knew, somehow, that I was going to end up in construction. I've got it in my blood."

As a 21-year-old graduate of York University's Urban Development and Engineering program, Dall'Acqua was already finding his creative stride with a local landscaping company. There he would improve his craft and lay the groundwork (pun intended) for a lengthy and prosperous career.

After completing a slew of successful projects and generating plenty of buzz on the local landscaping scene amongst clients and professionals alike, Dall'Acqua founded Kingscape Landscape Construction Group with his partner Justin Nasello in 2007. The pair turned Kingscape into a neighbourhood sensation almost overnight. Dall'Acqua's ability to visualize a concept, capture each client's unique taste in style, and deliver a quality, finished product is what helped put Kingscape on the map.

Today, as a 29-year-old with more than 7 years experience under his tool belt, Dall'Acqua continues to meet projects with a

healthy supply of excitement and enthusiasm. "People always ask me, 'what are you on?'" he laughs.

For the record, Dall'Acqua's high is a natural one that stems from a genuine passion for his craft. Even fresh out of surgery with four screws in his leg following a hockey injury, his energy can scarcely be contained. So much so, that despite having a 12-person landscaping crew at his immediate disposal, Dall'Acqua personally attends to every aspect of a project from conception to conclusion. "I'm hands on", he admits, though confesses, "I'm not the kind of guy who goes around barking orders. That's not how I was raised. If the guys need a push, then I'm on the shovel. I drive excavators. I drive dump trucks. I'm on site 100%. I like being involved."

When prompted to recall his proudest architectural accomplishments, Dall'Acqua instead reminisces about the meaningful relationships he has developed with his clients over the years. "You feel good when the client is shaking your hand. Sometimes they hug you, or they cry, because it means a lot to them. I'm friends with a lot of our clients. We get to know them and they consider us family. I feel proud about that."

Dall'Acqua's passion for his career often means the line between work and play is blurred, though he manages to find time to escape the job site every now and again. You can occasionally find him traversing the west coast of California, soaking up the sun, catching some waves, and gathering inspiration for his next big project.



PHYTOS DEMETRI

BY LORI A. SWEEZEY – DUNDAS, ON

The general school of thought is that many people are predisposed to certain personality traits by virtue of their genetics. Creativity runs deep in the genes of Phytos Demetri, owner of Phytos Demetri Landscapes in Binbrook, Ontario. The middle son of three boys, Demetri grew up in Hamilton, Ontario surrounded by creative people. From musicians to the family owned custom cabinet business, creativity played an integral part in his life path.

As humble as the day is long, Demetri could be considered the “new kid on the block”, having established his business in 2006; but don’t let the short time frame fool you. His work is outstanding and full of the creativity that he comes by so honestly... the apple didn’t fall far from the tree!

Graphic design seemed like a sensible career choice, but Demetri found it too confining. “Even though I was designing and being artistic, I found it to be too restrictive in that I could only work within a certain set of parameters,” he says. This realization led him in a completely different direction, and his harnessed creativity was about to take flight.

A personal trainer for 15 years, Demetri found a way to integrate his gift for being creative, with his love of physical activi-

ty and the outdoors. He switched his program and enrolled in a Landscape Design program instead. This seemed to quench his need to design and build, while nurturing his green thumb. He’d found his niche.

“I love the physicality of this work. I love being able to create something and watch as it grows into what it was meant to be... a beautiful work of art. I love seeing a project come together. The only thing I dislike about this job, is waiting for that to happen,” he laughs.

Demetri’s attention to detail speaks to the incredible work ethic instilled in him by his Greek parents. “No shortcuts; I always try to go a step above and beyond. When I do something, I have to do it ‘better than right’... I try to think about issues that may possibly surface in the future (of any particular job) and do what I have to do to prevent that from happening.”

It’s clear that Demetri’s work is exceptional. The obvious passion he has for his profession, his easy-going demeanor, and his honest and straightforward personality will be the catalyst for a very long and successful career.

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BOX-BREAKING

DESIGNING WITH THE SPIRIT OF A CHILD

BY PAUL LAFRANCE – THE UNIVERSE

I paid a visit to my clients Raun and Jasprit in the spring of 2011. I liked them right from the start. They were adventurous and had childlike spirits. When it came to their outdoor living space however, they admitted that they were incapable of imagining how that space could ever be anything more than the sad, wretched area that they were forced to stare at everyday. After one quick glance, I understood their plight.

They lived in a narrow townhouse complex in downtown Toronto, Ontario. Their existing deck was the same as everyone else's: A thirteen-foot wide by twenty-seven-foot deep, pressure treated monstrosity, built over a parking garage with a not-so-gorgeous view of a fifty-foot warehouse wall. There was absolutely zero privacy and next to no access. Nothing about this space was

inviting enough to make anyone want to sit and spend time here!

I asked Raun and Jasprit to describe their favourite vacation spot. They spoke at length about their love for South Miami Beach. They loved lounging in shaded cabanas during the day and partying in world-renowned nightclubs in the evenings.

Enter Imagination... Was it possible to turn this sorry space into a Miami Beach inspired nightclub? Raun and Jasprit said, "No way!" The kid in me said "WHY NOT?!" And that's exactly what we did.

Was it a big pain in the butt?

You bet!

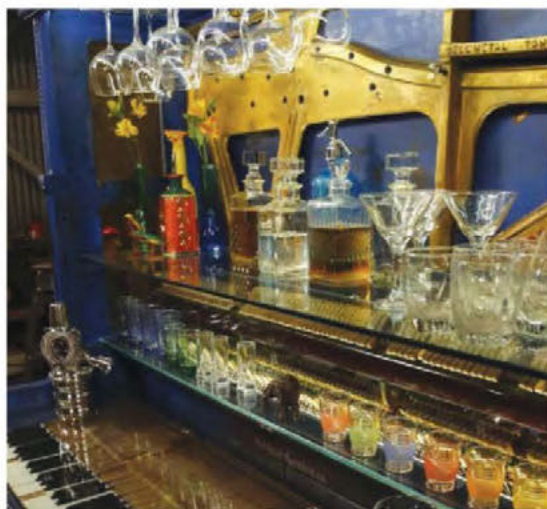
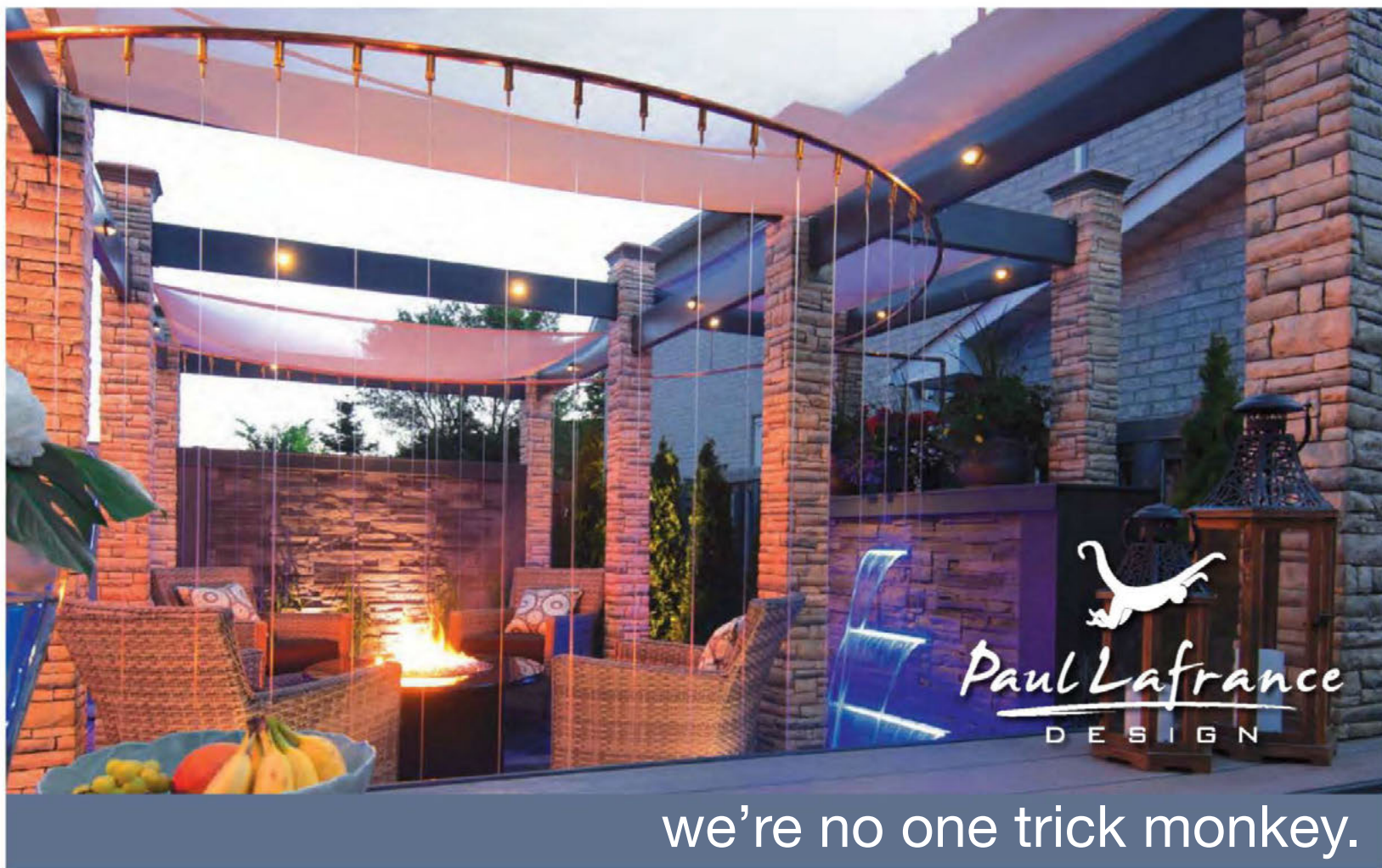
Was it worth all the hard work to see the looks on their faces when they saw what our team did?

You betcha!



Now, they could escape to Miami whenever they wanted, with the use of a little whimsical imagination and a healthy dose of reality. I may not be exploring the universe or hunting dinosaurs, but I certainly felt like a super hero that day. I was able to transport people to a place that was 2,400 kilometers away by simply having them walk through a door. Booyah!! How cool is THAT?

Imagine what can be done in YOUR home if you look at it through the eyes of your own inner child? Go ahead! Stretch out your arms and legs... bust open that big box of limitations — and get ready for a whole lot of unexpected FUN!



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Your Vintage Garden

BY MONIQUE CRAIG – DUNDAS, ON



Spring is upon us, which marks the beginning of gardening season and outdoor living. Whether you need a locale to entertain family and friends, a setting to enjoy nature, or a private retreat, creating your vintage garden can be both fun and affordable.

While inspiration for this can be seen in natural vistas, it can also be found in the nostalgia of our minds. Browsing through an antique market is like a portal to the past – an opportunity to reclaim fond memories from our youth. Antiques whisper their story to us harkening back to the ‘good old days’, reminding us of past comfort and enjoyment. By taking a trip back in time, you’ll discover hundreds of unique design elements that can be organically integrated into natural settings to create functional living spaces.

Current trending principles of upcycling and repurposing serve to breathe new life into old objects. This involves thinking outside of the proverbial box with the intent to assign meaningful objects a fresh new purpose in a different context.

Antique shopping is such a great activity! Diehard enthusiasts will tell you that they feel like a kid in a candy store. They call it the ‘thrill of the hunt’. The reward is discovering the perfect item that speaks to you. And, the added bonus is that it doesn’t have to cost a lot of money.

Whether your garden type is English tea, French provincial, Cottage, Eclectic or Zen, incorporating antiques into your plan adds character, personality and tells of your unique connection with the past. ►

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TO

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Vintage French Garden

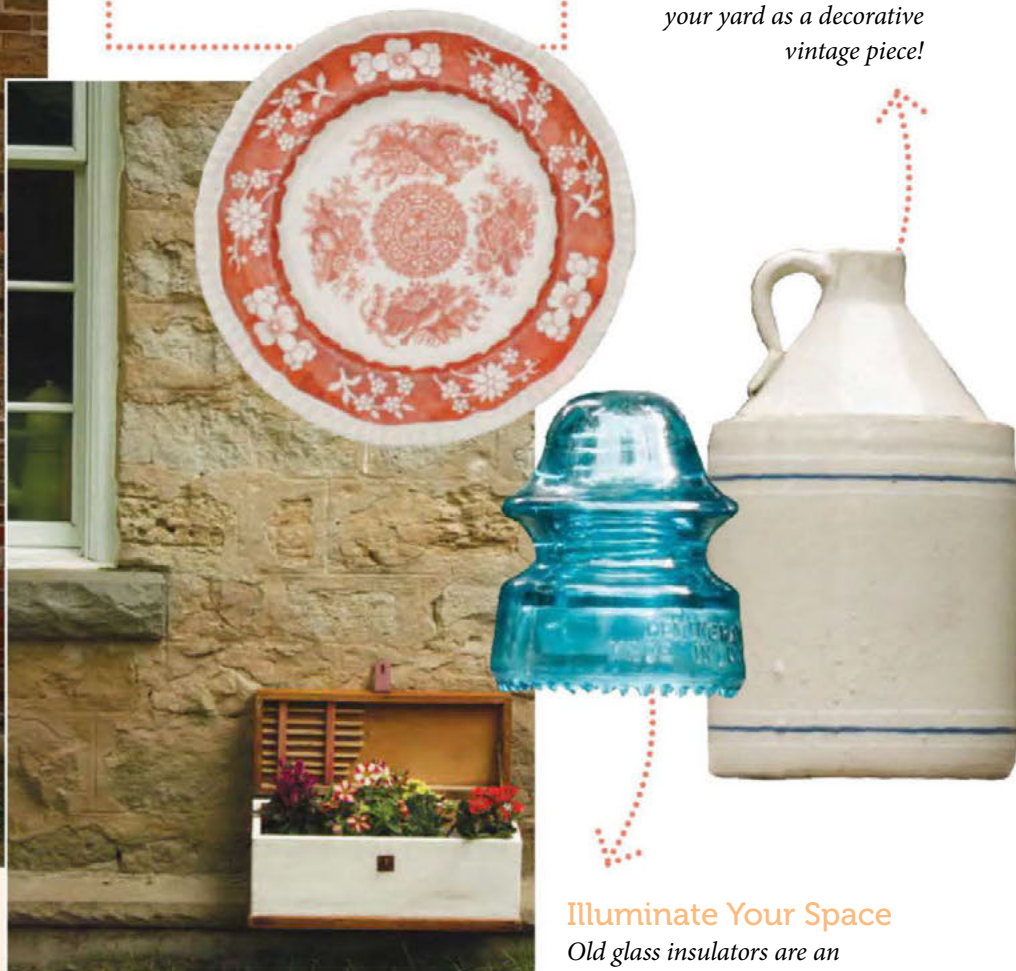
Unwind and embrace the summer sunset. Incorporating rustic French provincial style and elegance sets the mood for romance and tranquility.

Serve Up Ingenuity

China plates make a unique architectural element adding vintage charm and nostalgic notion. They make perfectly pretty borders for your whimsical English garden.

Stunning Stoneware

It's a fine art to create these beautiful pieces of stoneware, much like earthenware and porcelain. Display them in your yard as a decorative vintage piece!



You've Got Mail

An aged wooden mailbox makes for a perfect planter filled with overflowing flowers. Try a quick restrain or whitewash to add new life!

Illuminate Your Space

Old glass insulators are an inexpensive décor element that sparkle in the afternoon sun. Easy to repurpose as hanging candle votives, a flower bed border or atop of copper tubing in the garden, insulators add beauty and luster as garden art.

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A photograph of a well-maintained backyard patio. A large, leafy tree dominates the upper half of the frame, casting shade over the area. A wooden fence runs along the back and sides of the yard. The patio is paved with light-colored bricks. In the foreground, there's a black metal table with a glass top and several chairs. To the right, there's a larger black metal table with a glass top and more chairs. In the background, there's a wooden deck with a sofa and a coffee table. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and inviting.

BIG VISIONS

FOR SMALL SPACES

BY GLENN CURTIS – MONTREAL, QC

Landscaping for maximum value & beauty in your seemingly tiny yard

Let's dispel the myth about size once and for all: no matter how small your garden is, you have the space you need to create an inspired outdoor living area. Are you making do with an uninteresting, non-functional yard thinking it is too tiny to landscape? You are not alone. Popular photos of expansive, meticulously landscaped estates often overshadow the exceptional results that can be achieved by those with humbler homes, such as condos and bungalows. Diminutive spaces are often perfect canvases for landscaping elements

and design techniques that really impress when used creatively and in close proximity to each other.

Interested in a personal oasis? A relaxing outdoor nook? An intimate, upscale entertainment area? Success when landscaping small yards usually comes down to the experience of the designer and the expertise that goes into realizing a vision specifically tailored to your space. However, there are common techniques that landscape professionals use to transform a small yard into something much greater. ▶

"Garden design is all about concealment and surprise." — Andrew Crofts, *Secrets of the Italian Gardener*



1

DESIGNING TO SCALE

Designing a small outdoor space is not a matter of scaling down a plan that works on a larger property. Smaller areas have inherent limitations that often necessitate prioritizing and trimming down your landscaping wish list. No matter how well designed, your little yard might not fit that huge storage shed, gazebo, outdoor kitchen, spa, water garden, sculpture and fire pit that you've always dreamed of.

Prioritizing your needs will help you to distinguish “must-have” from “would be nice”. A good designer will intuitively recognize the inherent limitations and opportunities to realize your big vision within a small footprint in a way that just feels right.

2

DEFINING KEY AREAS AND A MULTIFUNCTIONAL SPACE

Dividing your total space into distinct areas ensures maximum enjoyment and value for your investment. You can realize a great deal of functionality in a smaller yard by first clearly defining key areas (such as an entertainment zone, dining, garden and lounging areas) and then designing each of them with creativity, care and attention to detail.

3

DELIGHTING IN THE DETAILS

By necessity, small landscapes are very detail-oriented because you will invariably be close to every design element. Be prepared to invest in quality materials that will be featured prominently. Whether you love country-cottage style or modern-urban chic, plan to have every inch of your space accounted for in the design to avoid having incomplete or poorly executed aspects that become undesirable focal points.

TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Where you see a boring, flat rectangular lot, a landscape design professional can see a host of possibilities for interesting, engaging vertical design elements. Creative carpentry, custom privacy screens and fencing, architectural stonewalls and plants of varying heights, colors and textures are just some of the ways to create a dynamic landscape that works on every level.

EMPLOYING FOCUS AND PERSPECTIVE

An elegant water feature. A charming pergola. A corten steel flower-filled planter. A natural stone pathway that culminates into an inviting patio or decking. When tastefully incorporated into your landscape, eye-catching elements create natural focal points and destinations for the eye. They can make your small yard feel more spacious while conveniently drawing attention away from your neighbour's old and neglected shed.

Just as train tracks appear to converge with distance, landscape designs can use straight lines that subtly slant inward toward focus points to create the illusion of a longer yard. Integrating diagonally oriented elements into a rectangular space is another way to make a space seem larger.

EMBRACING COLOUR AND TEXTURE

When you use vibrant, attention-grabbing colours at the front of your space, less colourful components behind them will seemingly recede to give your landscape an added sense of depth and size. Different species of plants and flowers can add unique character while a tasteful balance of stone, wood and metal materials can create enchanting textural contrasts.

Unlike those who own larger properties, you have the opportunity to transform your ordinary small yard into a truly extraordinary space with significantly less work and investment. Whether your objective is to enjoy an intimate backyard “staycation”, or simply upgrade your home's curb appeal, no yard is ever too small to benefit from a thoughtfully crafted, professionally designed landscape.



Glenn Curtis is the President of Plantenance Landscape Group, an award-winning team of landscape designers, craftsmen and horticulturists that has been transforming the ordinary into extraordinary outdoor living spaces throughout Montreal and surrounding areas for more than 30 years | www.plantenance.com

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feeling



Landscape Your Balcony?

BY VICKI L. MORRISON – OSGOODE, ON

WE'VE GOT THAT COVERED!

Condominium owners searching for ways to maximize their living space need only walk out onto their balconies to find underutilized precious square footage. As urban Canadians seek ways to make their balcony spaces more comfortable, functional and natural, companies are developing more products for them to choose from. Here are 3 of the best...

1

KANDY

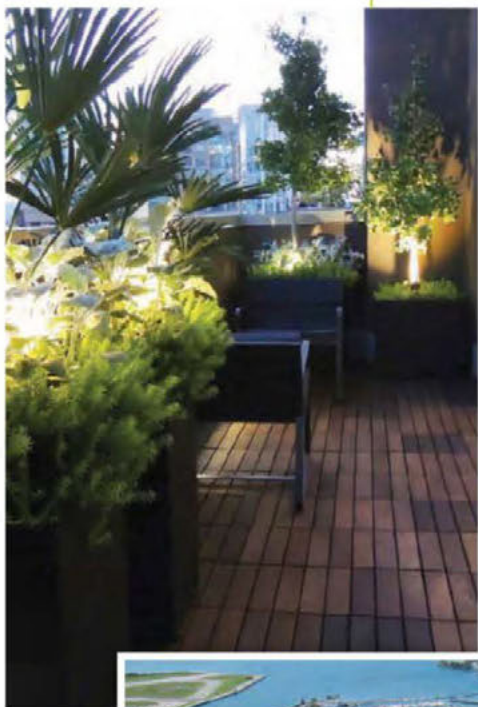
The market leader providing service, selection, and installation of the highest quality and best available floating outdoor flooring systems for condo balconies.

KANDY has identified the ideal materials for varied Canadian climates and their products are designed specifically for condo balconies, ground levels, and restaurant patios.

Condominium complexes have rules that owners must follow. Luckily, KANDY products require no glue, grout or nails, and are not affixed in any way to the structure, which means no issues with condo rules.

Kelly Neissens, president of KANDY, started the company because she was looking for a 'form meets function' flooring alternative for her Vancouver condo balcony, and she could not find anything that did not break condo rules, was of high quality, and that suited her urban sense of style.

To see a gallery of KANDY flooring options suited to every taste visit www.outdoorflooring.ca



3

DEKORRA PRODUCTS



These decorative rocks are the most popular 'enclosure' line within the landscaping industry. Enclosure, meaning the products easily cover a septic tank lid or a telecommunications hub on a front lawn.

Made from textured material called Real-Rock™, these gritty, tough, variegated rock-like surfaces of the artificial rocks are astonishingly realistic, and blend in with other natural textures. And all DekoRRa rock products are made from recyclable materials.

When applied to condo balconies, the small artificial DekoRRa rocks are hollow, lightweight, and do not break condo rules.

In fieldstone, riverbed, sandstone or buff, DekoRRa products look like real rocks, but also come as patio planters that can hold a ten-inch diameter plant pot, which is an alternative option to the natural balcony.

New products to the line are garden boxes that look like they are made of stone. Varying from planting vegetables on the balcony of a condo, to a riot of colourful flowers, the possibilities are endless.

For more information on DekoRRa Products visit dekorraproducts.com

2

AGL GRASS

This artificial grass product is made using both recycled and recyclable materials, such as cryogenic rubber infill; while the 'artificial dirt' is made from 100% recycled tires. Each blade of grass is separately composed of polyethylene, while the unique infill system is made from cryogenically frozen rubber granules derived from recycling.

The product is resistant to Canadian weather extremes, water damage, and discolouration and damage of exposure to UV rays. It will not decay or breakdown, and it can be cleaned of leaves and debris simply by sweeping the balcony.

AGL Grass, which provides a full eight-year warranty, feels soft under the feet, and makes an urban space feel more natural.

With 18 years of experience in the world of Sport Field Construction, AGL and parent company IC Improvements, have developed specialized products and installation procedures to enhance even the smallest spaces.

For more details about artificial grass and its applications, visit AGL Grass at www.aglgrass.com



OUR favourite THINGS

RESERVE FIRE PIT WITH BARREL STAVE TOP

For the enthusiast, nothing comes closer to perfection than sitting in a Napa winery and enjoying your favourite glass of wine. With The Reserve Fire Table from Vin de Flame, you can now bring the flavour of the vineyards into your own outdoor living space. Made from authentic retired wine barrels from California wine country, each fire pit is distinct and one of a kind. Similar to wine itself, these fire pits are bold, sophisticated, and luxurious. No matter the what time of year, outdoor lovers and wine enthusiasts alike can relish in the Napa lifestyle enjoying their best glass of vino around these gas fire tables.



ADIRONDACK

Made from authentic retired wine barrel wood, the Classic Adirondack Chair adds a touch of rustic luxury to any yard. The craftsmanship in this chair is apparent, from its lustrous design to its smooth finishes such as the notch in the arm rest designed to hold your favourite glass of wine. Whether relaxing under the stars or soaking up the sun, the Adirondack Chair will be the envy of every neighbour.



BOWL

The perfect marriage between modern and reclaimed, this Barrel Side Serving Bowl is made 100% from retired wine barrels. It's sleek design and large size (24"L x 17"W x 5"D) makes it the perfect centerpiece for any kitchen island or dining table.



with
Carol Rocha

CEO and Founder of Vin De Flame and Green Barrel Inc., Carol designs modern furniture and accessories out of rustic retired wine barrels. Residing in California Wine Country, she is in the perfect location to quench her passion for repurposing barrels that have been used in the production of wine. Best known for her Vin de Flame wine barrel fire pits, Carol is continuously conceiving new ways to bring this precious material out of the wineries and in to your home.

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EAST OAKVILLE



NATURAL STONE VENEER



STUCCO & NATURAL VENEER

Contemporary meets classic in this beautiful south east Oakville, Ontario backyard renovation, designed to use several aspects of the existing yard by updating and reconfiguring, while adding some wonderfully functional and inviting new elements.

Integrated lighting, sound and heating systems enhance the "enjoyability factor" while the water and fire features invite you to sit, relax and contemplate the good things in life.



PERGOLA

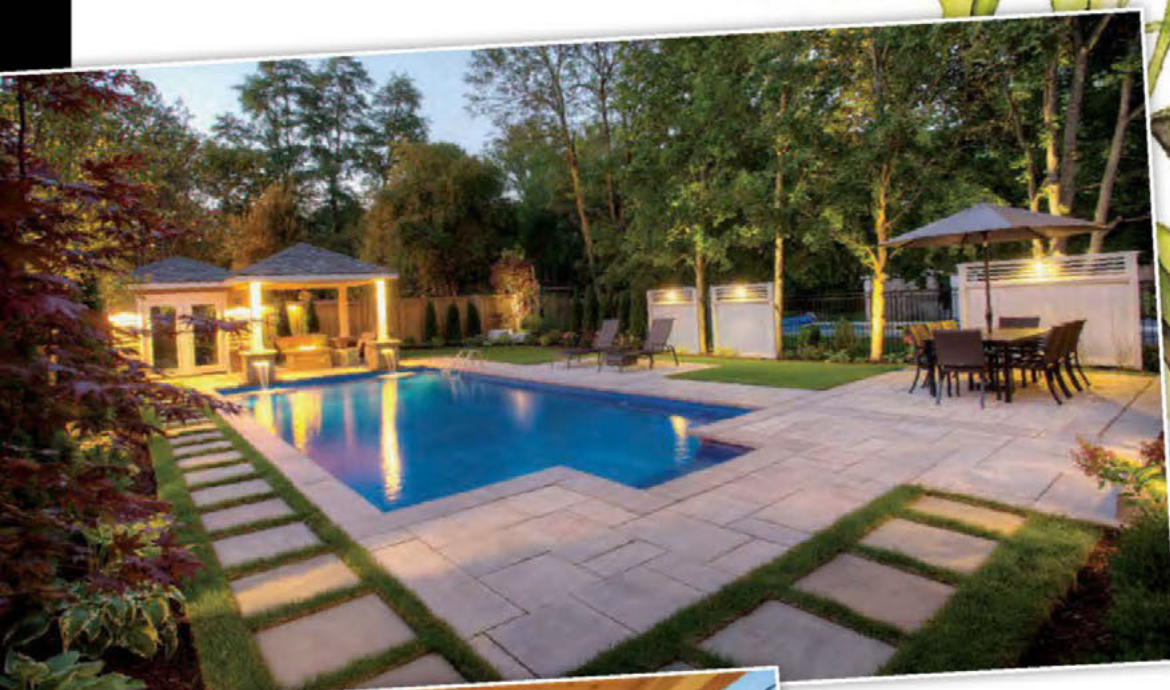
Rendered concept sketches and photos by uncommonground.ca



BUILT IN STEPS



MIDSUMMER NIGHT

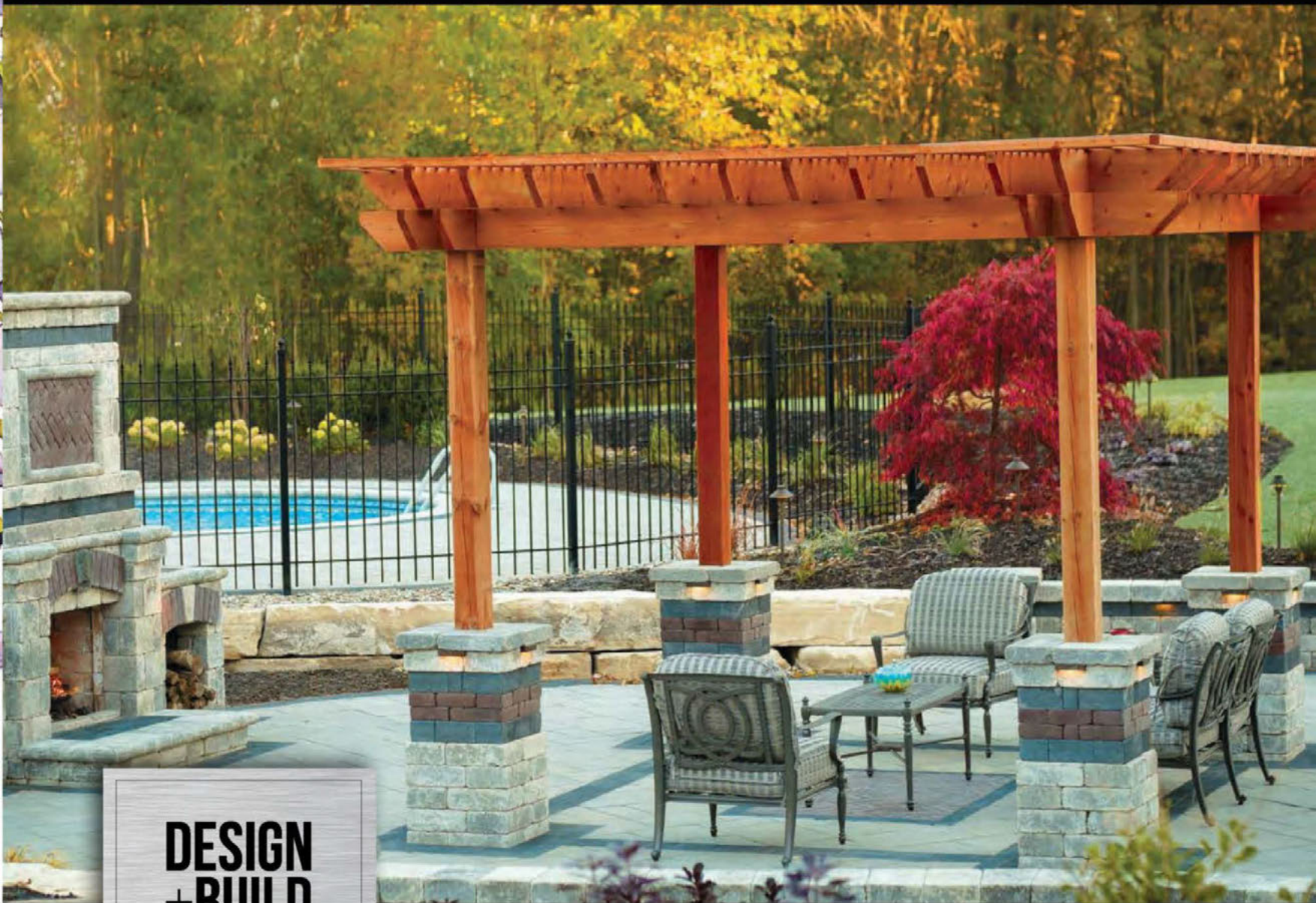


Could anything be more magnificent than clean lines, soothing colours and ambiance beyond your wildest dreams? Probably not.

Planit Green Landscaping designed this beautiful space by defining specific areas for dining, lounging and socializing, creating a sense of order without feeling stuffy or rigid. Stepping-stones set into the surrounding grassy areas provide a functional walkway while giving the yard a sense of spaciousness. The wood privacy screens take their cues from the pool house and the architecture of the home, while providing points of interest and privacy. This is the perfect space to entertain in or perhaps spend some time alone, curled up with a good book while enjoying the fire table and the soothing sounds delivered by the water feature; all the makings of the perfect location to make you feel that awesome connection to self and nature.



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BREWING CANADIANS A COLD ONE

BY LUKE HELLEWELL – BOLTON, ON

Looking out the front window of a bustling café just east of Chinatown, you can sit and watch while people ride past on motorcycles made in India, wear helmets made in Brazil and shout obscenities in Québécois at anyone in their way. It was then that I realized that communication is much more efficient now than it ever has been. But as technology begins to overwhelm us with virtual options, one can't help but long for a more natural connection. ►

SAM
M
RO
BER
TS

A portrait of Sam Roberts, a man with a beard and blue eyes, wearing a white V-neck t-shirt. He is standing in front of a dense background of green ivy leaves. The lighting is soft, highlighting his facial features.

Sam Roberts
Juno Award-winning Canadian
rock singer-songwriter.

“Crafting a great beer takes years of experience and the ability to think outside the box.”

Sam Roberts Band cut their teeth in a pre-YouTube world obsessed with U2, when a “stream” was a body of water and collaborations were still riddled with spontaneity. Voted “Best Collaboration Beer” at this year’s Session Craft Beer Festival, the Sam Roberts Band Session Ale, brewed by Ontario-based Spearhead Brewing Co., holds tight to the band’s usual business model: flavour forward.

“It always comes down to personal taste,” said Spearhead Brewing founder Dimitri van Kampen. “It makes me so happy that after years of drinking big brand beer, I’ve had several people tell me [excitedly] that they never knew beer could taste like this!”

Tasty precision doesn’t come to life overnight! Award-winning brew master Tom Schmidt was taught the old-fashioned way at a brewery in his native Prague before immigrating to Canada in 1968. After 30 years of refining his expertise, Schmidt was recruited by van Kampen and Spearhead chief financial officer, Martin Villeneuve, to assist them in making a roster of great-tasting craft beer. According to Roberts, the creation process was “pretty amazing to witness” from start to finish.

“I’ve had a lot of beer to drink in my lifetime,” laughed Roberts, “but I’ve never really taken the trouble to learn anything about the art of making beer. The same way you write a great song, crafting a great beer takes years of experience and the ability to think outside the box. All the things that make a good

songwriter, make a good brew master but, you know, how do you go about transferring an idea from the brain to the palette, and then to another person and have them sort of bring that to life?”

It all began with one simple question: “What kind of beer do you like?”

“So after meeting the band and figuring them out, we pitched the idea of a low ABV English pub-style ale with an American spin,” explained van Kampen. “It’s refreshing and flavourful, but light enough [4.5% ABV] that you can enjoy a few responsibly.”

As Roberts intended, the Sam Roberts Band’s new album *Lo-Fantasy* (released in February via Paper Bag Records) hums a similar tune... an assortment of well-sourced local ingredients brought under one roof, allowing room for astonishment, all the while living up to the high expectations of observers. And much like their catalogue, their new Session Ale is best enjoyed amongst your favourite friends and family.

“The same way I want people to listen to my records, I want them to try our beer too” exclaimed Roberts proudly. “Don’t the two just go hand-in-hand? You can’t really have one without the other... you know, especially as Canadians... we tend to go overboard during the summer because we have such a limited amount of time to enjoy the great weather. We want to bbq everyday and have neighbours and friends hanging around all the time! The beer hour can easily be bumped up from the usual 6 PM in the winter to 5, sometimes 4:30 in the summer... and that’s a conservative estimate” he laughs.

Though they’re still fairly new to the brew game, Spearhead-honcho Dimitri van Kampen recognizes that blood is thicker than beer, by looking to his past in order to build his future.

“The roots of beer run deep in my fam- ▶



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ily tree,” said van Kampen. “My father is Dutch and my grandfather is Czech. I can’t even imagine entertaining without beer... inside or out! We, at Spearhead, are proud to be a part of the craft beer renaissance happening in Ontario right now.”

Launched in 2011 with their signature Hawaiian-style pale ale, the family run Spearhead Brewing Co. likes to keep their focus on small batches of flavourful beer. If it sounds like the same old song, here’s the part that’ll make your needle skip: every Spearhead beer is naturally carbonated, unfiltered and unpasteurized. These measures are part of a time-tested procedure that has been used in Europe for centuries.

“All beers are carbonated, but natural carbonation occurs when you leave the yeast in, after bottling instead of filtering it out... similar to drinking a wine or champagne,” explains van Kampen. “This allows the beer to age better and its flavour to become more complex with time.”

Van Kampen elaborated, “Garett Oliver from Brooklyn Brewery put it best: “If bread can last three weeks on a shelf without going bad,

it’s probably not bread anymore.” We don’t use corn syrup or sugar. Instead, we use barley and natural ingredients, such as coriander, cinnamon and orange peel, to make our beer as flavourful as possible. We will not dilute it in the hopes of making a greater profit.” Their attention to detail is getting the attention it deserves, blessing them with the “Best Beer” award at the 2014 Toronto Beer Week Drinker’s Choice Awards for the SRB Session Ale, after a successful November launch at 50 LCBO stores across Ontario.

It appears that this Canadian music icon is creating a “buzz” (no pun intended) on many levels these days... his music and his beer...two Canadian pastimes that bring people together and create a place of connection.

Visit www.spearheadbeer.com to find a local pub or LCBO that serves Sam Roberts Band Session Ale. And visit www.samrobertsband.com to find tour dates.





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URBAN FARMING

THIS AIN'T GREEN ACRES!!

BY SUSAN MATE - CALGARY, AB



When Charity Briere's kids come home from school, they don't race for the TV or the computer. Seven-year-old Lochren and ten-year-old Theya instead scramble for the backyard to collect eggs laid by their six hens.

While it might sound like the traditional life of Canadian farm folks, this is anything but. The family lives in Red Deer, AB and they are among 60 households that the Central Alberta municipality is allowing to raise a small flock of backyard hens.

Urban chickens are illegal in most Canadian cities including Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa and Toronto, where scores of backyard chicken operations exist under the by-law radar. Yet hens – not the notoriously noisier roosters – are safe from the by-law brigade in a handful of other places including Red Deer, Vancouver and Guelph, ON.

Briere says her six hens – Ygritte, Crystal, Feezie, Morgana, Tupper and Bella – are family pets who help fertilize her garden, minimize insects and allow her to teach her children about sustainable food practices, sourcing, and environmentalism. The connection to food is strong – ie., eggs don't come from a foam box on a supermarket shelf. "We've learned so much together. It's great having that dialogue with your kids. And when you only have a flock of six, you treat them like pets, name them, and give them really great food. They communicate with coos and clucks and they have very distinct personalities. And the eggs we get are so good. We've become egg snobs, actually," she laughs. "The yolks are bright yellow and centered... once you have these, you can never go back."

The stay-at-home mom is one of the founding members of the local chapter of CLUCK – the Canadian Liberated Urban Chicken Kollektive (www.cluck.ca). The group advocates for by-laws allowing modest backyard hen farms, used primarily for egg supply. Right now, more than a dozen Canadian municipalities are in the process of addressing their by-law issues.

The Red Deer situation is the envy of Kelly, a professional father of two children in Toronto who has secretly raised a handful of hens for four years. His neighbours don't object to the creatures, which as Kelly notes, sleep at night, are quieter than dogs, and "eat all the creepy crawlers" in the yard.

Kelly, (who asked that his last name be withheld), says he gets information on chicken feed and health care from farmers at local markets and via a closed Facebook page. "I think having hens is the environmentally responsible thing to do. It reduces food waste, the chickens get all sorts of food scraps and my garden doesn't need chemical fertilizer," he notes.

"I'm not in it for the politics. It's a no-brainer: happy chickens give you better eggs. My eggs are amazing; those in the grocery store have been sitting there for four weeks. I love fresh eggs and this is the greatest thing: when I want them, I just go out into my yard and get them! It's like an egg buffet."

Ron Berezan, a Powell River, BC, master gardener, CBC commentator, and proprietor of The Urban Farmer (www.theurbanfarmer.ca), consults with businesses, families and individuals on biodiversity, food systems and small livestock integration. He says the general

public are misinformed that chickens are dirty, carry disease and are bothersome. But awareness is growing.

"There's been a massive transformation on how people think of their food," says Berezan. "But people have been keeping livestock in cities since cities began."

"Education is crucial to change," he further adds. "There's phobia involved around chicken-keeping, which is unfounded. And sometimes cities are looking for reasons not to do it, simply because they do not want to deal with change."

The issue is dear to restaurateur Dawn Chapman, who opened Lazy Daisy's Cafe (www.lazydaisyscafe.ca) in Toronto 3.5 years ago to introduce organic, farm-fresh food to her neighbourhood. Her famous Eggs Benedict is made with free-run Mennonite eggs raised without drugs or hormones. "It's 100 times better an egg than any other," says Chapman, who cherishes her childhood experiences on her grandparent's farm and

supports a 'best practice' approach to allowing urban chickens. "My grandparents were real farmers. They would never have used feed that was non-natural. I wanted to bring that part of the farm to the cafe," she says. A highlight for Chapman and her customers is the bi-monthly "egg depot" where customers of the local business Eggy Weggy gather pre-ordered, free-range farm eggs.

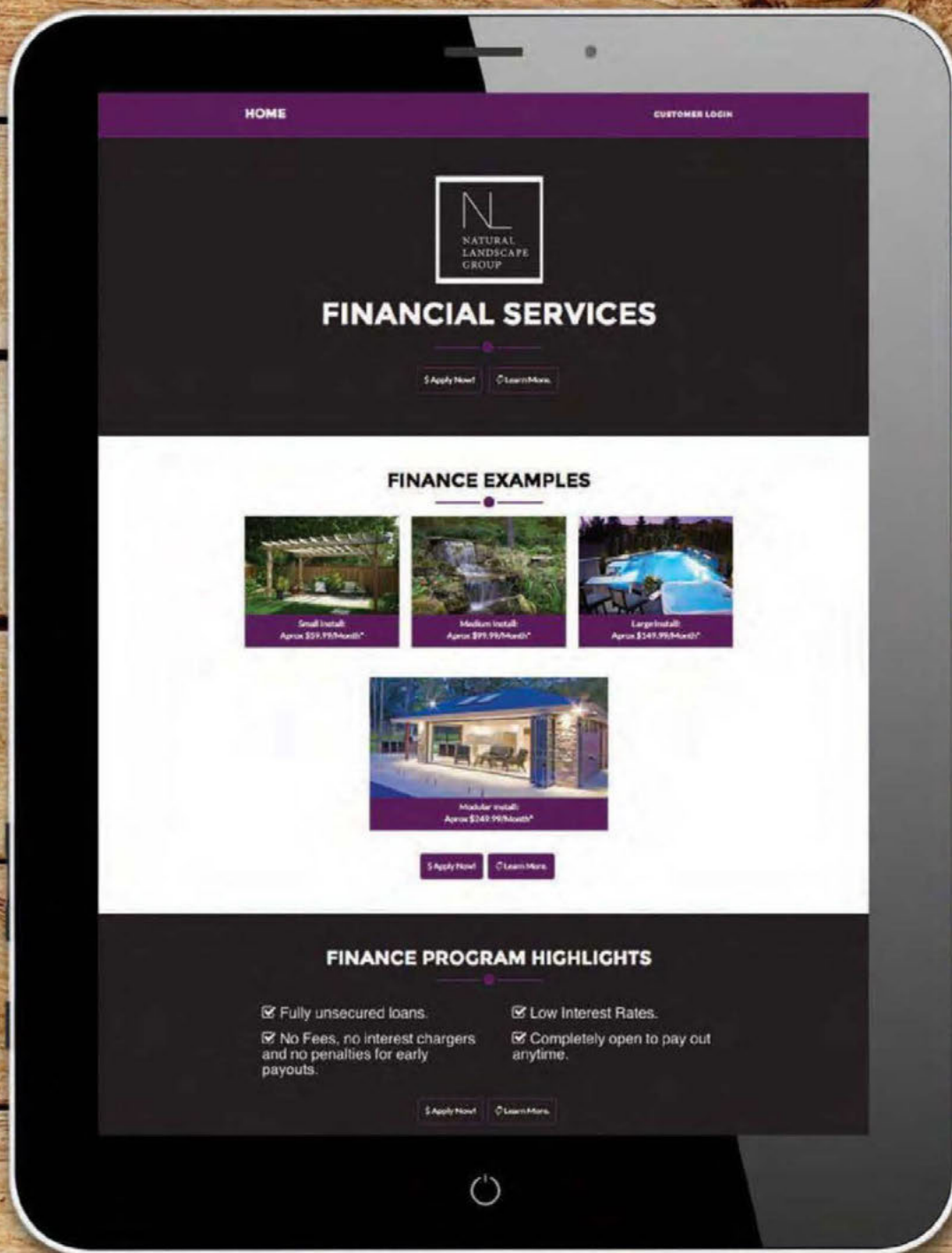
"It feels very country... very Laura Ingalls!" Chapman laughs. "That's how it should be. It's all about the conversation. There has to be more public conversation to change the misunderstanding out there."

"We've become egg snobs, actually. The yolks are bright yellow and centered... once you have these, you can never go back."

URBAN FARMING is the practice of cultivating, processing, and distributing food in or around an urban area. It can reflect varying levels of economic and social development. In the global north it often takes the form of a social movement for sustainable communities, where organic growers, 'foodies,' and 'locavores' form social networks founded on a shared ethos of nature and community holism.

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BLOWN AWAY

Sonance Landscape Series is a totally scalable outdoor speaker system that delivers perfectly even volume coverage and unbelievable sound quality throughout any size space.

BY KAREM BANNA – BURNABY, BC

There are many elements to consider when entertaining outdoors. One of the most important and often overlooked elements is music, and how to get it outside. When consulted, a professional landscape designer can help integrate many of today's indoor technologies including WIFI, TV and audio systems into your outdoor space.

But let's be clear. Your landscape professional would never take two gargantuan stadium spotlights, flash them across your yard, and call that "landscape lighting".

And the same holds true for audio, as blasting two speakers across your backyard does not a surround sound system make! A properly planned listening en-

vironment is only created with the use of strategically placed smaller speakers.

Case in point...

David (not his real name) had recently purchased 52 acres of land in the outlying areas of Toronto, ON. He had a vision to turn his former equestrian farm into a dog sanctuary. The stables, staff house, main home, and a variety of other buildings were all to become part of this vision. His private residence would also be on the property, where he intended to do a fair amount of entertaining.

A custom pool was to be installed, drawing inspiration from the Grotto at the infamous Playboy mansion, as the ►



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NOT INTRUDE INTO YOUR
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focal point for the entertainment area. So it went without saying, that a space of this magnitude, required an outstanding sound system.

With several of the other buildings already in the throes of renovations, David (still not his real name), had the team from Synergy Systems Group working on the audio/video in each one. The challenge was to create the same musical experience for their client... outside.

"There was only one product on the market that would fit the bill," says Rob Campol, owner of Synergy Systems Group. "We knew that throwing a couple of speakers in the entertainment area would never create the experience our client was looking for."

And that product was the Sonance Landscape System (SLS) manufactured by Sonance (the same company that invented the well known in-wall speaker).

Installing the SLS is not much different than installing an array of outdoor lighting. One wire is buried around a given area, and then speakers or "heads" are installed at predetermined locations around the area, with subwoofers also buried into the ground. The entire system essentially disappears into the landscape, and the perfect ste-

reo audio is equally dispersed around the intended area. The best part about this system is that music will be at a comfortable listening level across the entire space.

And once David's entertaining area was fully landscaped, he would be hard pressed to find the 20 hidden speaker heads, and the 5 buried 12" subwoofers. The secret's in the precise placement.

Just as many lights create comfortable lighting levels in an area, so too does many speakers create comfortable audio levels in the same space. And many does not necessarily mean brighter or louder. Consistency is key.

In terms of volume, at normal listening levels, the audio from the SLS system is very pleasant and unobtrusive. And due to its unique design, the sound coming from the system is very focused in the direction it faces. Thus, it is not too loud for neighbours in opposing directions. So entertaining aficionados can keep the party going with excellent sound but without fear. And as David can attest, when the system was turned on for the first time, there was only two words he could use; "blown away."



LS68SAT

SATELLITES

- > Small enclosures disappear into the landscape
- > Provides uniform sound throughout the entire location
- > Extreme weather rating provides a long service life over a broad range of environments
- > Three performance levels available



LS68 SUB 12E System

SLS SYSTEMS

- > Systems provide optimal amount of Subs and Sats for a predetermined amount of space.
- > System is expandable to accommodate more Sats or Subs if needed.
- > Sonance offers customized SLS design and layout services.



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The Sonance Landscape Series is regarded by many as the world's best sounding outdoor audio system.

Strategically placed satellite speakers and subwoofers encompass the perimeter of the property directing the sound towards the listening areas. The result is breathtaking performance and a perfect blanket of sound. The additional benefit is that the music is contained in the areas where it's wanted and not spilling out to disturb neighbors.



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Warm weather IS HERE

*Patio season is coming on
fast and barbecues across the country
are being dusted off and fired up.*



BRIAN MISKO

“HOUSE OF Q”

BY PETER VOGLER – VANCOUVER, BC

OL Magazine decided to go looking for Canada's top barbecue chef and we found him, just outside of Vancouver. It's Brian Misko of “House of Q”, the home of award-winning sauces.

We caught up with Misko at his house in Cloverdale, which is a little piece of Texas horse country on the West Coast, and exactly where you'd expect to find the Canadian world barbecue champion.

Misko has just returned from a competitive barbecue tour in the US, where he travelled with his wife Corinne in their colourfully painted House of Q pickup and trailer. He lists the competitions carefully and with evident pride: a seven week tour including Kansas City, Dallas and Lynchburg, Tennessee which hosts the crown jewel of barbecue competitions - the Jack Daniels Invitational. They travelled up and down the southern roads just like a touring blues band, then carried on to Vegas for the World Food Championships where they scored a Super Bowl-sized barbecue victory with a 1st place finish.

Misko started his quest for the best barbecue after visiting those same southern states as a tourist and finding the flavours to be so overwhelming and amazing that he came back to Canada bent on unlocking the secrets to great barbecue.

Barbecue is as ancient as man slamming meat onto fire. It's pri-

mal. And if you want to impress the ladies, a bit of tasty sauce doesn't hurt. The essence of barbecue is the recombination of all these elements: good wood for the fire, the right herbs and spices for the sauce and the rub, just the right cut of meat, heat applied precisely, and of course, family and friends to share it all with.

Thermometers are key to making it great. Misko is the barbecue king and a thermometer is his sceptre. The right heat tightens the proteins but dissolves the fats and collagen so that when you get it right, you have the most succulent and flavourful barbecue in the world. Misko knows, because he has created the most succulent and flavourful barbecue in the world, and he has the medal to prove it!

After years of experimenting and competing, Misko possesses a connoisseur's palate for barbecue. For years he even worked with a sommelier and now describes his sauce work in the terms of the vine. As he works on new sauces in his kitchen, he uses the sommelier's vocabulary - “nose”, “aroma”, “notes”, “weight flavours”, “zones of tasting”... But when it comes right down to it, he uses all this subtle knowledge and experience in order to create just one thing – a big bold flavour slap to your face, and that slap is called barbecue!

This and so much more is in Misko's first book, *Grilling with House of Q*, coming out in the Spring of 2015. ▶

We sat down with Misko to ask him a few more personal questions...

OLM: What brings joy into your life?

BM: *I think the biggest joy, from a cook's point of view, is knowing that you've got a gathering of people - even people you've never met - and sharing a bite, a laugh, a giggle together.*

OLM: If you could change the world...

BM: *I'd like to see more sharing, more of people having a conversation over food or a drink and sharing that moment together.*

OLM: What food would you recommend for the spring/summer season and why?

BM: *Hey Barbecue, duh! No boundaries... think of your patio as your outdoor kitchen. So whatever you cook indoors, attempt or think of how to cook it outdoors.*

OLM: What is your favourite go to spice and why?

BM: *I'm a prairie kid of Ukrainian descent. My "go to" is onion and garlic, hands down.*

OLM: What drink would you suggest for a barbecue?

BM: *Bourbon or whisky, but you can also match it with a bold sav/cab or find that contrast with a zinfandel or gewurtz...and of course beer, haha.*

OLM: Your greatest life accomplishment to date?

BM: *Wow, um, offspring, children, getting married - things of that nature. Making the decision to become an entrepreneur was a massive decision. Is that even an accomplishment...?*

OLM: If you could change one thing about yourself what would it be?

BM: *(laughing) I am secretly and quietly an extremely analytical thinker and at times I want to shut it off. Not shut it off, maybe manage it.*

OLM: Where do you see yourself in ten years from now?

BM: *Other than sitting on a beach with a cocktail with a little umbrella in it? I think with the flavours we do and the story we share we have a tremendous amount of growth ahead of us, not only in Canada and the US but even beyond. I want to cook competitively in Europe, competitively in Australia...bring the Canadian flavours to the rest of the world.*



BIG DOG BEEF RIBS

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 rack beef ribs, 6 to 10 rib bones
- 2 to 3 Tbsp House of Q House Rub or Big Beef Rub
- 1 Tbsp seasoned salt
- 1 Tbsp granulated garlic (optional)
- 2 to 4 cups beef stock
- Flavourings such as soy sauce, minced ginger, garlic cloves and diced onions for the roasting pan
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup of House of Q Rock'n Red BBQ Sauce or your favourite tangy tomato-based barbecue sauce

TO MAKE:

1. Prepare your smoker or your grill for smoking, on medium heat.
2. Prepare the ribs by removing the membrane on the back. To do this, start by lifting an edge of the membrane at the end of a bone. Using a paper towel, grasp the membrane and pull to remove it from the back of ribs. Discard the membrane. (You can also ask your butcher to do this for you.)
3. In a bowl, combine the rub, seasoned salt and granulated garlic until well mixed. Sprinkle the back of the ribs with half of this mixture. Allow to rest for 5 minutes, turn the ribs over and season the front of the ribs with the remaining rub mixture.
4. Place a packet of wood chips, such as hickory, oak or cherry, on the hot side of the grill underneath the grate. Set the ribs on the cool side of your grill (no heat), close the lid and smoke for about 2 hours. You may need to replace the wood chips packet to continue smoking. The surface of the ribs should be dry and "crusty", which is called creating a "bark". Leave the grill on.
5. Pour the beef stock into a roasting pan, and add your choice of flavourings. (I often use all of the ingredients listed.) Place the ribs into the pan, meat side down, and cover with aluminum foil. Set the roasting pan back on the cool side of the grill, close the lid and cook for another hour or more. (There is no need to smoke more wood chips at this point.) To test the meat for tenderness, use a skewer or a toothpick to poke the meat. If it slides into the meat easily, almost like boiled potatoes, remove the pan from the cooker. Take out the ribs, and return them to the indirect side of the grill.
6. Set a sieve over a clean saucepan. Pour the pan juices through the sieve, and discard the solids. Stir the BBQ sauce into the pan juices, and bring to a boil on the stove or grill side-burner over high heat. Simmer for 5 to 10 minutes as the sauce thickens. Brush the ribs with this sauce, and continue to cook them with the lid closed until the sauce is set or caramelmized, another 30 to 45 minutes. (You can brush on even more sauce while the ribs cook - it all adds flavour in the end!) Once done, remove the ribs from the grill and allow them to rest.

To serve, cut between the bones and dig in. Don't forget to bark like a big dog!





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TORONTO, ONTARIO

FOOD DUDES



UNCONVENTIONAL + GOURMET

BY PATRICK DIXON – TORONTO, ON

Toronto's food truck scene has experienced a surge in popularity over the past few years, paving the way for some inventive and inspiring takes on mobile cuisine. Few are able to traverse the landscape of this rapidly emerging food service industry as deftly as The Food Dudes.

Founded in 2007 by Adrian Niman, The Food Dudes began as a home-based operation that provided catering services in and around the GTA. The game plan was simple: use quality ingredients, provide exemplary service, and create a unique client experience. All went according to plan, and in 2011 The Food Dudes took their show on the road with the debut of their food truck.

Fast forward to the present day, where Dave McIntyre and Nate Turnbull are at the helm of what has become a wildly successful staple on the food truck circuit. McIntyre and Turnbull have over 40 years of culinary experience between the two of them, including more than seven as Food Dudes.

Their propensity for combining the "gourmet" with the "unconventional" is what makes the Food Truck's menu so mind-bogglingly cool. It's also what makes their style of cuisine so hard to classify.

"It's just food we want to eat," offers McIntyre. "We're products of Toronto. There are all these cultures that influence us and that manifests itself in our food." According to Turnbull,

that undefinable flavour profile is what allows the Dudes more freedom to venture into the uncharted territories of gastronomy. "We're hoping to open up the city's eyes about what can be delivered on a food truck. It doesn't have to be what's been on the streets for 20 years. It doesn't need to be a hot dog; it doesn't need to be a hamburger. It can be something completely crazy. It can be an explosion of flavour."

So which particular flavour explosion is a favourite among Food Truck patrons? "Captain Crunch Fish Tacos," both men declare in unison. The fish tacos have been a mainstay on the menu since the Food Truck's launch. The dish can be best described as a deep-fried cod, coated in Cap'n Crunch cereal, with guacamole, lime spiked slaw, topped with smoked sour cream, hot sauce, scallions, tomatoes and a whole lot of fanfare.

If fish tacos don't whet your appetite, the Food Dudes Truck offers more favourites like Mac 'N Cheese Balls, the Smokey Reuben Sandwich, and the Nutella Bomb – a dessert as grandiose as the name would suggest.

To the delight of their cult-like following and to the benefit of those who have yet to experience their craft, the Food Dudes are planning to launch a second Food Truck in 2015, as well as take-out locations across Ontario in the not-too-distant future. With plans to expand well under way, it is clear that The Food Dudes will be winning hearts, minds, and appetites for years to come.



TRAILBLAZERS

BY CURTIS POTTER – EDMONTON, AB

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

DRIFT

Photos by Kenya Rae Photography



If you work in the downtown Edmonton area, or consider yourself an authority on local food trucks, then you've probably heard of Drift. For those of you who haven't... why are you depriving yourselves? From March until October, they can be found out on the streets of Edmonton... and that's plenty of time to familiarize yourself with this fabulous duo.

Nevin and Kara went to elementary school together. The universe works in mysterious ways though, and they would end up marrying in '07. Like attracts like, and soon they would find themselves in a business together, based on a shared passion for great food... but not without a few hiccups along the way.

Drift was originally a contingency plan. Nevin and Kara had initially set out to open a full-fledged restaurant; one that Kara envisioned as "a gastro-pub, but not quite. One with a very casual atmosphere." However, despite their commitment and planning, the financial investment was just not practical – at least not then. So, the next best thing was... a food truck!

They did their research well. They moved to Ireland for a year in 2009 to bolster their culinary experience and travelled the globe to add an array of foods and flavours to their repertoire. Perhaps most importantly, they visited the food truck mecca and hub in Portland, Oregon. There, they not only ate great food, met friendly people and asked a lot of questions, but they found

validation in their (then) crazy plan to open a food truck in Edmonton.

In 2011, Drift was one of the first food trucks to open in the city. Although they were catering to a niche that had previously gone unfulfilled, they were still very nervous. They did not know then that they would become one of the trailblazers on the local food truck scene. Food trucks are a seasonal business, and (especially when compared to cities such as Portland), Edmonton was going to be a challenge. However, they were able to make it work. Before then, Kara had never owned a cell phone, let alone a Twitter account. That soon changed when she realized the power behind social media. She soon started tweet-

ing their locations and keeping their rapidly growing customer base up to date. They prided themselves on buying from local vendors, and taking a very morally responsible approach in the purchasing of their proteins. Before long, people were flocking to Drift. Since then, 20+ other food trucks have come onto the scene with Nevin and Kara establishing themselves as local gurus in the business.

In early 2015, they will finally realize their original dream. Their restaurant will open for lunch and early evening, with a globally inspired menu, "similar, but different" to the food truck menu. And, not to worry, their food truck will be back next year too ... just maybe a little later!

Trend topic
City Jungle

*Fresh green, brilliant colours:
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RAYMOND BOYD – HALIFAX, NS

BEDFORD, Nova Scotia

TIN PAN ALLEY

Bedford, Nova Scotia sits at the north-western end of the Bedford Basin, an extension of Halifax Harbour. Its origins rooted in the Mi'kmaq Indians, the Acadians, and a paper mill that caused the town to thrive way back in 1819.

Currently, it is home to one of the country's most original food trucks... not that the food truck idea is original... but the menu at the TIN PAN ALLEY food truck is deliciously original.

Since 2013, Karl and Jill Warmé, along with their partner Brendan Sullivan, have been treating Haligonians to their unique international cuisine, inspired by a "foodie" experience while visiting Karl's mother in Holland. Frites served in a paper cone, morphed into an explosion of gourmet food – fit for fine dining.

The name Tin Pan Alley grew out of a Stevie Ray Vaughn song. The actual definition is "a city district (originally New York) where composers and publishers of popular music do business". So, although it's Halifax – not New York, and it's food – not music, it all boils down to creativity. And creative this team is! With dishes like steak with chimichurri, duck confit with crackling and curds, popcorn crocodile and shrimp Pad Tai (just to name a few items); it's no wonder they are making a name for themselves on the truck circuit and beyond.

Sullivan has been a Red Seal Chef for years. He studied in Ontario and worked all over Europe. Warmé worked in fine dining. He was the General Manager at Splendido in Toronto, Ontario and Jill, who studied at George Brown College in Toronto, was the "cute new pastry chef" (his words not mine), when they fell in love.

Sullivan and Warmé had considered a restaurant at one point, but the timing was off...young families needed tending to. A few years later, a friend suggested the food truck idea to Jill...who mentioned it to Warmé...who mentioned it to Sullivan...who agreed that they should all just go for it! Obviously, they did. "The truck allows us to indulge our entrepreneurial spirit while being able to fully participate in our children's upbringing. We make our own hours and decide our own direction. Not many jobs allow for that," says Warmé.

In the "off" season, the Warmés travel to warm and far off places as a family and Sullivan tends to his other business ventures...Presto Pastaworks and On The Wedge Pizza, sometimes from the nearby ski hill, (when he's not busy...which is hardly ever.)

Tin Pan Alley should be on every "bucket list" in the country, whether you are a visitor to the Halifax/Bedford area or a local Haligonian. There is something to please everyone's lust for food. Yes, even vegetarians. Get the App... find the truck... and experience a walk down Tin Pan Alley.



Photo by Lenny Mullins



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SANDY MACFADYEN

BY MELISSA NEZEZON – HAMILTON, ON

Do you ever wonder about people out there... in the world? Where they're from? What they do for a living?

Sandy MacFadyen, the dapper singer/musician of The Reposadists and owner of Toronto's 'go-to' tequila bar Reposado, spent the 80's and 90's playing in punk bands. He felt compelled to follow his love for music but, as most musicians do, MacFadyen supplemented his income for 10 years working in telecommunications. This provided him with the business smarts he was going to need in the not-so-far-off future.

A somewhat satisfying existence to be sure, but he was about to fall in love for a second time while honeymooning with his new bride in Akumal, Mexico. On the third day of their stay, Hurricane Gilbert wreaked havoc on the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico for nearly nine days. In the strange calmness of the aftermath, the locals were breaking out their best tequila and that's when MacFadyen had his first real experience of what tequila is really all about. That's how it all came together; while celebrating love, being caught in the middle of a Category 5 hurricane, and having the taste of the finest tequila dance on his tongue, he had an epiphany. What to do with all this and still be able to play music?

Open up Reposado of course! And that's exactly what he did. With a collection of over 140 agave spirits, live music, a winterized patio, stunning stained glass art, and a staff that MacFadyen takes to Mexico every January to decompress by the beach and tour agave distilleries, I'd say MacFadyen knows how to do things right! Not a fan of tequila? Don't be mistaken. Not all tequila is created equally. The tequila served in most bars are mixtos and can contain up to 49% additives. MacFadyen recommends 100% blue agave; the finest Jalisco, Mexico has to offer.

We had the pleasure of talking with MacFadyen to see what makes him the cool, calm, collected, tequila collector that he is.

OLM: What's your favourite part of your job?

SM: *It's fun discovering new products and introducing it to customers. Singing... I live for the live music Wednesday to Saturday. I love connecting with the musicians and supporting live music. ▶*

OLM: Besides having fun running a successful business, what do you like doing?

SM: *Scuba diving, snorkeling and playing guitar.*

OLM: Where do you get your tequila from?

SM: *Private orders through agents from the LCBO. Some Tequila isn't even available anymore because we bought them in cases. We have a large inventory from over 7 years ago. Let's just say, we carry almost 6x more variety than a liquor store.*

OLM: Why did you decide to open up Reposado?

SM: *It was time to look for something different. My wife couldn't get a good margarita around the city. We've found some good places in NYC, but nothing around Toronto.*

OLM: If you weren't doing what you do now, what would you be doing?

SM: *I don't want to do anything else. This is the best job I've ever had and I'm still doing music.*

OLM: What's your business mantra?

SM: *It takes all kinds of personalities to run a business. It's not just about my personality and me. It's all about variety.*

OLM: Number one suggestion when drinking tequila?

SM: *My favourite way to enjoy tequila is neat or with one ice cube — usually a good quality Blanco or Reposado.*

Tequila is not simply for shooting with lemon and salt anymore. It won't make your messy divorce any cleaner or your partner any better looking. But it will astonish you with its delicious versatility and its smooth character. If you've not been a big fan of tequila in the past, I challenge you to drink just one of MacFadyen's delectable concoctions.

Open your palate to the diversity that tequila has to offer. Be adventurous. Life tastes better that way!

BLOODY JULIO

INGREDIENTS:

1.5 oz Hornitos Reposado Tequila
3.5 Sangrita (tomato juice, finely chopped
jalapeño citrus & maggi seasoning to taste)

TO MAKE:

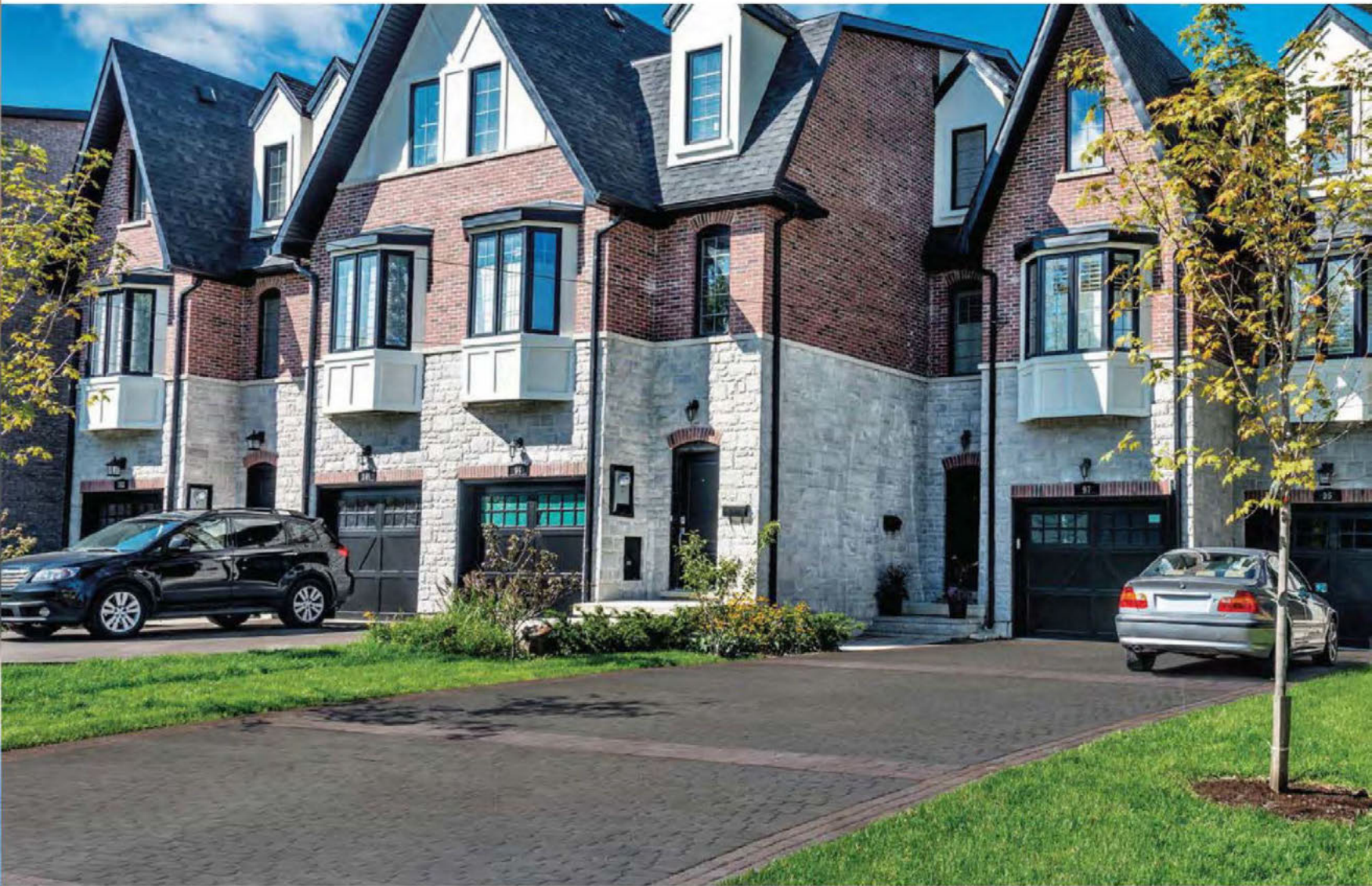
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lime & hot pepper



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A little knowledge goes a long way

BY TIM RIVARD – HAMILTON, ON

So, you’ve decided to spruce up the backyard a bit. You’ve hired your landscape firm and now... AHHHHH! What is all this intimidating equipment in every corner of your yard?!

For the average homeowner, this scene can be a bit overwhelming. Having at least some idea about what the equipment is and its purpose, can take some of the anxiety out of the equation. Our “big-boy-toy-advisor”, Tim Rivard of Galer Equipment in Dundas, Ontario, has taken some time to share his knowledge and ease our minds. This equipment does not have to be the boogieman under the bed. Rivard can shed some light on the situation for all of us!



LOADER BACK HOE BX25

The Kubota BX25 TLB is a compact estate tractor, which is equipped with a factory installed loader and backhoe attachment. With its reasonable price range it allows the homeowner to accomplish many different landscaping tasks on an affordable budget. Designed for the homeowner or the entry-level landscaper, this machine has the versatility of a compact loader, lawn mower and backhoe all in one reliable and comfortable machine. When equipped with a thumb, it can be used to pick up small fallen trees, debris on a property and small landscape rocks.

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A Zero Turn Mower sets the industry standard for lawn maintenance with its versatility, speed, durability, ease of use and low maintenance. It is cost effective to operate and reduces the homeowner’s bill.

The professional landscaper will use a Zero Turn Mower to maintain a beautiful lawn for you.

This mower gives an extremely high quality of cut while travelling very quickly, leaving the property perfectly and efficiently groomed. These mowers can be equipped with a bagging system, which can assist in maintaining proper thatch level, and they are ideal for fall clean-up in your yard.

LANDSCAPING 101



MINI EXCAVATORS

Mini excavators are indispensable for the professional landscaper. They vary in size in from .8 to 8 tons. There are many different adaptations for this machine, which makes it a great multi-tasker. For example, the smaller excavators have retractable and expandable tracks which make them ideal for getting through narrow gates to access backyard projects.

They are excellent for digging retaining walls, patios, ponds or footings and perfect for trenching in gas, water and drainage lines. The dozer blade is used to grade a property or to fill in holes. When equipped with a thumb they are ideal for picking up large stones, logs and debris or for demolition.



TRACK LOADER

The track loader is very much like a skid steer, but because they are equipped with tracks, they will not compact the soil. They also provide better flotation allowing landscapers to work on projects while ground conditions are soft or wet. They are equipped with a quick attachment plate allowing them to be fitted to several different attachments to accomplish a variety tasks.

This machine has limitless possibilities. It moves material with ease, loads trucks, grades soil, and may be used as a forklift. One of its major advantages is that it is able to cross soft soil or a lawn without leaving ruts behind. The Kubota SVL track loader has an extra high lift capability, modern controls and a spacious cab.

Natural Warfare.

Using Plants to Combat Allergies

BY SARAH PENNEY, ND – HAMILTON, ON

Spring has finally sprung, paving the way for sunny days, budding plants and blossoming flowers. But while this beautiful scene may seem like nothing but roses to some, to others there is a silent assassin hiding just below the surface. That's right, we're talking allergies and all the discomfort and inconvenience that go with them. Allergies affect millions of us every year, but don't despair! Your time in the yard does not have to be hijacked by sniffles, sneezes and congestion. Before you start popping anti-histamines this year, consider testing out some of these tricks in preparation for nature's impending pollen ambush.



ACUPUNCTURE

Recent evidence has suggested acupuncture treatment may provide symptomatic relief for those with allergy symptoms. Several treatments may be needed to evaluate the magnitude of response, and it is important you seek out a qualified acupuncturist or naturopath to perform this therapy safely.

CONTROL YOUR EXPOSURE

You can't completely avoid the great outdoors but decreasing your level of pollen exposure at night can help relieve seasonal sniffles during the day. Showering before bed can also help to get pollens out of your hair and skin. Consider keeping your windows closed and purchasing a HEPA-filter unit for your room or furnace to prevent exposure while you sleep.

HERBAL MEDICINE

There are two herbs that have evidence supporting their use in the prevention and treatment of allergy symptoms: butterbur and nettle. Both are thought to have an anti-inflammatory action that may decrease swelling in the nasal passages and reactivity.



PICK UP A NETI POT >

Although neti pots have experienced a surge of popularity in the last few years, they have been known to combat and cure allergies for generations. A neti pot is just one way to perform a nasal saline rinse to help clear allergens out of your nose, decreasing allergy symptoms. Rinse with a saline solution 1-2 times per day – visit your local health food or drug store to find a neti pot.



NUTRIENT THERAPY

Quercetin is a bioflavonoid found in foods like apples, onions and citrus fruits that is often used as a natural anti-histamine during allergy season. It is available in supplement form, and may be most effective if dosing is initiated before symptoms arise. Vitamin C is another therapy often used in conjunction with quercetin and is thought to have a similar action.

Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are on any medications before starting any natural remedies to avoid potential interactions.

Have a happy and healthy spring!



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Piece: *Short Eared Parliament*



CARVE

Inspired by the North - the beauty and severity of its extremes - Vancouver Island based sculptor Shane Wilson breathes life into the discarded outer garments of arctic impermanence: antler, horn, ivory, tusk, and bone.

His signature style - the cool logic of a mathematician warmed in the guiding hands of a poet—lives in the uneasy conversation between organic and non-organic abstraction.

Originally from Ontario, Wilson moved to northern British Columbia and then to the Yukon during the 1980s. Conversant in more traditional art forms - drawing, painting, clay sculpture - his interest in working with natural media was sparked after attending an exhibition of antler carvings, the rugged and tactile artifacts appealing to his sense of discovery.

After a short period of experimentation, Wilson honed the techniques necessary to express his unique vision while explor-

ing the fragile limits of natural media as diverse as fossilized woolly mammoth tusk and whale baleen.

In 2012 Shane Wilson was commissioned by the internationally renowned design firm Yabu Pushelberg to create a signature showpiece for the opening of Four Seasons Hotel Toronto. His stunning Candle Ice Two double-antler sculpture graces the west lobby.

“My intention is to create beautifully original sculpture, ethically and sustainably, directly from nature in found antler, horn, ivory, bone and bronze - the carving suggestive of a way forward for our rapidly changing planet, one in which we’ll create beautifully original solutions, ethically and sustainably, directly with nature.”

shanewilson.com



Piece: *Look To The Skies*

Hamilton, Ontario native Boris Kramer learned his blacksmithing techniques from his artist father Richard Kramer, seemingly by osmosis; at home, art and metal were part of daily life. "I am a sculptor. I heat and hand forge metal until it gives form to expressions of human energy as it engages and relates. When heated, metal is extremely forgiving, that's why I choose it as a medium. After completing a degree in Fine Arts at McMaster University and a Masters degree in Renaissance and Reformation History, he committed his artistic future to metal. Kramer's sculptures have a home in numerous corporate and private collections and can be found in many galleries around the world.



Piece: *Shattered Sphere*

The Brent Comber studio is located in North Vancouver, Canada. Nestled in a busy marina, his location allows him to maintain an intimate connection with his customers, the local design community, and the natural materials found on the Coast Mountains of Vancouver Island. The inspiration for Brent's pieces stems from his connection to the basic material used in his work. This connecting has everything to do with personal history, sense of place in the region and the community of North Vancouver in which Brent was born.



JOEL PLASKETT

BY LUKE HELLEWELL – BOLTON, ON

We all make mistakes. Some of them are our regrets; some of them are our best moments. But as digital devices start to add a high standard of potential to our lives, the natural nuances are lost in a tornado of precision. That's why Nova Scotia indie singer-songwriter Joel Plaskett retrofitted an old storehouse in the heart of Dartmouth, fully equipped with an analogue console (formerly belonging to pop R&B artist Usher) built to outshine the dim glow of computer screen. Welcome to New Scotland Yard.

"Nothing on the radio feels accidental any more. I blame digital technology," said Plaskett. "Analog sounds change as tubes and capacitors warm up and tape gets hit over and over. I also prefer engaging faders instead of having to use my eyes and a mouse. Staring at computers tires me out."

Change in a familiar environment could well have been the theme for Plaskett's version of 2014, seeing him grow as a producer and overseer of the aptly named, New Scotland Records. But Plaskett has never been the type to let the head honcho clout get to his head; he modestly refers to his new space as "...a clubhouse for some great music by likeminded friends."

"I want creative control and luckily I have it on my own records. What I write about is personal and idiosyncratic so it would be weird to let someone else dictate the end result," admitted Plaskett. "The community is really supportive and I feel like I can follow my musical interests in whatever direction they may take me."

Plaskett sure knows how to keep his cash in his chatterbox. Not only will the award-winning New Scotland Yard studio continue to thrive as a breeding ground for up-and-coming local talent, but the Dartmouth native will finish recording his first album entirely at NSY, quite a bold statement for an artist of Plaskett's caliber and notoriety.

"I recorded about half of this album live off the floor with a bunch of people on deck," explained Plaskett. "It was really spontaneous and in the moment and I think

it sounds that way... We lost some good friends here in Halifax over the past few years and they're on my mind in a few of the songs."

Titled *The Park Avenue Sobriety Test*, a homage to his fallen friends, it becomes very clear that Plaskett has the unique ability to draw inspiration from a plethora of pockets, all while remaining cohesive. Maybe it's his wife Rebecca's outfit of the day. Maybe it's the small talk with his son over homemade granola and a decaf coffee before their walk to school. Maybe it was that time in Cape Breton where his old band Thrush Hermit followed a river until it spilled into the Atlantic, or maybe it's the smell of fresh cork. Whatever it is, it keeps him selling out shows across the country and breathing new life into the Canadian music scene.

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HAYLEY MCLEAN

BY LUKE HELLEWELL – BOLTON, ON

With a human population hovering around 30,000, livestock is still a likely livelihood for many in the lovely town of lovely Bolton, Ontario. The fields where crops grew during the day harvested a much different feast once the sun set...where whiskey-fueled bonfires became a perfect match for twangy guitars and group sing-alongs. But the harder I tried to let country music ingrain in me, the harder my heart went against the grain. Were the tropes of pick-up trucks, cowboy hats and farm towns the ingredients that seemed so tired? When I listened to the debut album (released this year via MDM Recordings Inc.), from British Columbia-raised, Nashville-based country singer-songwriter Hayley McLean, my appetite was apprehensive to say the least. Not only was the melody-driven effort easy to digest, it got tastier by the bite.

A product of her parents' record collection, McLean started strumming along to the likes of The Eagles and Dire Straits before the tender age of six. Although her parents saw her virtuosic potential as a musician, they knew that every great artist must let the world sink into their skin first. That same year, the McLean family took their three daughters on a life-altering voyage, sailing down the Pacific coast, equipped with only the bare necessities: food, clothing, and dad's rickety acoustic guitar.

"Such a trip will make you or break you as a family... it certainly set the tone for my life!" said McLean. "There was a lot of time spent staring at nothing and everything all at once... The family that I have been born in to... is everything to me. They are my home base."

If home is where the heart is, McLean's debut album sounds like a coastal cottage that found itself caught in a time machine and couldn't settle on a century. Between the reggae-tinged breakup rocker "Good Regret", the chilling grand piano ambience of "That's When You Know" and the sugar-sweet indie pop hooks in "Huckleberry Summer", McLean's most intriguing feature is her ability to remain authentic, all the while drifting through any style she pleases.

"I've never been very good at staying in between two lines," admitted McLean. "I can't

name one person who truly only likes one genre, so to create more than one feels natural and more truthful to who I am."

In addition to being honoured with the #1 spot amongst Fender's Top 10 Guitar Goddesses for her "remarkable chops", it's safe to say that McLean's versatility as a calculated songwriter, precise producer, and poetic lyricist, ("If you let me drive you car, I'll let you steal my heart") sets her miles ahead of her country counterparts. So what's the secret in her spice rack? Simplicity.

"A song starts with a feeling that translates into a melody," explained McLean. "And if it's a good one, the words just seem to fall in to place!"

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Jon Peter's Plant Picks

{RBG CURATOR & PLANT RECORDS MANAGER}

When you think of a healing garden, several plants come to mind. For some, 'healing' could mean that the plant has medicinal qualities, while for others the plants may relate to folklore or meditation. Often healing gardens are located near hospitals or schools, and seek to encourage human interaction with the 'natural' environment. As I am not a doctor, I do not provide recommendations for plants that cure disease, restore evil conditions or heal physically, mentally or spiritually. Rather, I seek to highlight plants which thrive in the local landscape, excite the five traditionally recognized methods of perception, and help to inspire people to spend time in the garden.

1 Touch: Upright Wild Ginger (*Saruma henryi*)

This native perennial of China is a close relative to the North American native wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*) and has many of the same cultural requirements - shaded garden with moist humus rich soil. The heart-shaped leaves emerge with a silver downy pubescence that is soft to the touch. The delicate, pale yellow, three pedaled flowers emerge above the foliage but are short lived. Be sure to only touch and don't taste, as this plant is toxic if ingested.

2 Smell: Heliotrope (*Heliotropium arborescens*)

So many exceptional plants are appropriate for this category; the distinct fragrances of *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* (autumn leaves), *Paulownia tomentosa* (spring flowers), and *Sassafras albidum* (twig) all come to mind. Of course the classics like lavender, gardenia, rose, wisteria, and lilac similarly thrill the nose. If your healing garden is confined to a small space, then heliotrope is a great option to provide a comforting vanilla fragrance during the summer months. This tender perennial is a Peruvian native and although grown as an annual, also performs exceptionally well in a container.

3 Taste: Peppermint (*Mentha × piperita*)

This member of the mint family (*Lamiaceae*) will satisfy more than just your taste buds and is an easy plant to grow in a moist garden environ-

ment. Peppermint has been used medicinally for thousands of years and has a wide array of uses, varying from flavouring for soothing peppermint tea to fragrances for cosmetic items. Obviously a healing garden could contain countless types of herbs and vegetables to indulge your taste bud needs.

4 Sound: Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*)

This drought tolerant, eastern North American native is an excellent addition to any garden. It is hardy to Zone 2 and features striking purple flowers that are an important nectar source for many pollinators. Characteristic of the pea family (*Fabaceae*), the blue false indigo produces large pods that turn black and persist into autumn. It is these dried seed pods (and the seeds within) that create the stimulating rattling sound as the breeze flows through the garden.

5 Sight: Seven-son Flower (*Heptacodium miconioides*)

This unique plant is gaining popularity in the landscape for its four-season interest. A large shrub to small tree, the seven-son flower provides visual appeal during all seasons; the tan coloured exfoliating bark in winter, the clean dark green leaves in spring, the white fragrant flower clusters in late summer, and the pink persistent calyces in autumn. This native of China will stimulate your sight and is easily adapted to many landscape conditions.

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ASHES TO ASHES...

LOOK! I'M A TREE!

BY LORI A. SWEZEY – DUNDAS, ON

Death and taxes... the two things that we can never escape, try as we may. As our time clocks keep ticking, thoughts of the inevitable creep into that little space in our head that we like to keep reserved for taxes. And then a family member dies. And then a friend dies. And it smacks us hard... right across the face. It's time to give it some real thought.

I'd always thought I'd like to be cremated. That was a sure thing. And afterwards my kids would carry a little vile of my ashes around their necks. But I'm sure they'd think that that was creepy. So then I thought about the connection I feel to water. Maybe they could just throw my ashes into the ocean?

No matter what your religion or belief system regarding death, it's nice to have options for what will become of the shell that carried your soul for the short time you spent on this planet. When I was a child and an adult asked the question “what do you want to be when you grow up?”- “A TREE” was not the answer I gave. I'm now reconsidering.

With home funerals becoming ever more popular, it would only seem appropriate to complete the circle and have our last hurrah be a natural and connecting-to-the-earth type of experience.

Here is a lovely option that allows you to truly become a part of nature and have a positive impact on the landscape and the emotional well being of your loved ones.

Roger and Gerard Moline of Estudimoline in Barcelona, Spain have put years of sweat equity into this project.

“Bios Urn offers a smart, sustainable and eco friendly way to approach what is most likely one of the most important moments in human life. It changes the way people view death, converting the “end of life” into a transformation and return to life through nature.”

These urns are 100% biodegradable, have no expiry dates, and can support a variety of seeds - pine, maple, oak, ginkgo, ash or



beech. They can be used for human or pet remains.

Its simplistic design makes it extremely easy to use. All components (besides the remains, of course) are contained within the Bios Urn. There is also opportunity to share in this experience by allotting some of the remains to other family members, allowing each to plant their own urn/tree in a place that has meaning for them.

The capsule of the Bios Urn was built to facilitate the growth of the seed. Choose the area you'd like to plant in and extract some soil from said area. Mix this soil with the components of the urn, add the remains of your loved one and plant the entire urn into the ground. The urn eventually decomposes, but in the beginning stages the seed germinates and voila.... your loved one has now returned to the earth in a very profound way. Admittedly this is not your typical burial, but I can't think of a more beautiful ending; because it's really not an ending is it? It's simply another beginning.

If you'd like more information on biodegradable urns and home funerals visit www.cindea.ca (Canadian Integrative Network for Death Education and Alternatives) and www.urnabios.com and check local by-laws.

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**CUTTING
EDGE**



Photos by Brian Van Bower, Aquatic Consultants, Inc.
President & Co-founder, Genesis

ON THE EDGE OF DESIGN

BY CHRIS GREGORY – HOLLAND LANDING, ON

With the ever-emerging trends in outdoor living, the *Vanishing Edge* feature for luxury swimming pools has been gaining popularity as *THE* look in residential pool and spa design.

The design process is known as *water-in-transit* among pool industry professionals. *Water-in-transit* encompasses a variety of edge detail from vanishing edge, perimeter overflow (elevated or deck level), knife-edge, slot edge, wet deck and more recently the grass edge. When incorporating these types of edge detail into your design, the pool or spa begins to separate itself from the traditional look and takes on an appearance more along the lines of “art”.

In choosing a vessel of this caliber, creating the illusion is no easy task and certainly not one for every pool company. Installing this style of pool

demands accuracy, not only in its structure and finished details, but also in its hydraulics and edge tolerances, which are as close as (+ or -) 1/32”. Impressive! Capturing this look and executing it properly demands a tremendous amount of time, precision and skill... along with a little cooperation from Mother Nature!

Imaginative design, the use of colours, materials and features such as fire and lighting, lend themselves to this already stunning look. With the illusion of disappearing water, mirror-like reflections, calming tones and the wide variety of available edge details... creating that WOW factor is now within your reach!

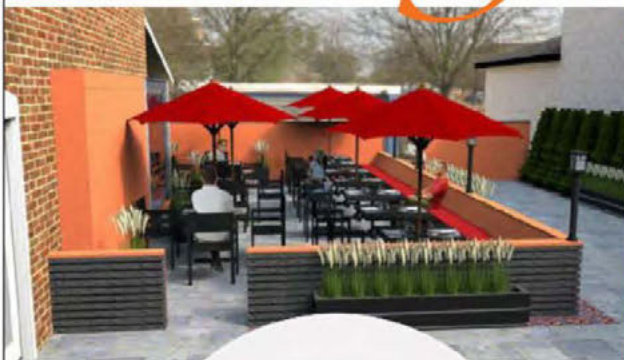
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CHRIS GREGORY

is the Principal Builder and Designer at Eco-Pools Inc. and is a Genesis 3 Gold Member.

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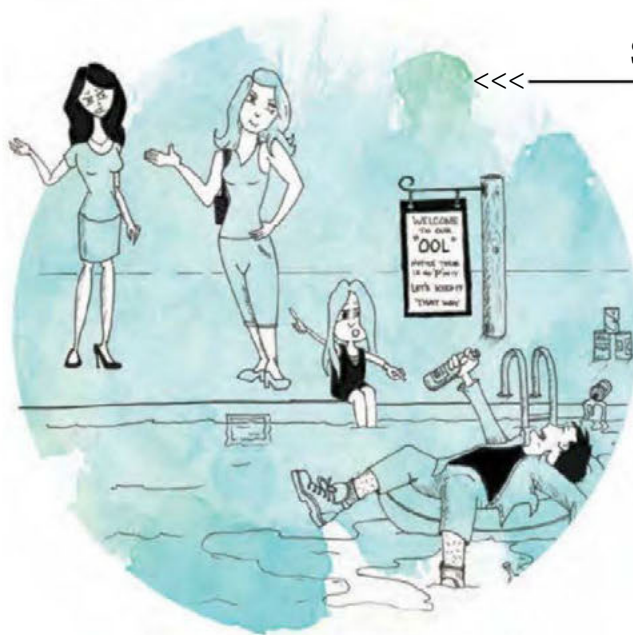
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SCENARIO 1

"Gail, it's been really great chatting. I'm so glad you guys could make it to the party! Oh, and just so you know, we have a little rule here – no peeing in the pool. Maybe we could go inside and show your kids where the bathrooms are?"

Inappropriate response:

"I'm sorry, Karen, I couldn't hear you over the deafening spectacle that is your muffin top."

Somewhat inappropriate response:

"Karen, Movember ended months ago."

Appropriate response:

"Oh, absolutely, Karen! And hey, while we're at it, perhaps we could show your husband too. He's had nine Coors Lights and hasn't left the pool for several hours. Talk about a water bug!"

NEIGHBOURS, EH?

BY ZACK FLEMING – KANATA, ON

With mild temperatures right around the corner, it's time to power-wash the deck, fill those propane tanks, and sharpen your social wits. For in neighbourhoods across the land, 'tis the season of meaningless small talk, rumour mongering, backhanded compliments and general bitchiness.

The neighbourhood social scene can be fraught with peril. There are foes, friends, and those who oscillate between the two as the wind blows. If you make all the right moves you'll see your stock rise. Beware though – this high status is tenuous. One witless comment or missed cue will send you tumbling back down the social ladder – you'll be a pariah, henceforth, subject to mean looks, catty comments and the odd death threat.

The scenarios played out here are intended to provide guidance to those gentle social novices who need a bit of steel in their repertoire; and equally, to those rash characters who lack guile and tact.

SCENARIO 2

"Boy oh boy, Jim, it looks like dandelion season has not been kind to your lawn. I sure hope those seeds don't blow onto my lawn. Ya know, if you want to borrow my dandelion picker, just go on into my shed and grab it. All I ask is that you bring it back the way you found it."

Inappropriate response:

"Ralph, how about I plunge that dandelion picker deep into your ...?"

Somewhat inappropriate response:

"Ralph, I was talking to your son the other day. Nice kid. He sure looks a lot like the mailman."

Appropriate response:

"Ralph, forgive my silence. Once again I've been rendered dumbfounded by the generosity demonstrated by you and yours. First, in an act of unfathomable selflessness, your wife offered us \$2.55 in Canadian Tire money after flattening our recycle bin with her Escalade. Then, your dog kindly offered his opinion of my lawn by dappling it with a series of sauce-like stools and now this dandelion tool offer. Ralph, it wouldn't surprise me one bit to find your family volunteering at a leper colony next week."

SCENARIO 3

"Hey Mike, how are you?! I must say you did a super-duper job painting your garage door. Umm ... but I'm just wondering about the colour. A few of us around the neighbourhood got to talking and we're just not sure it fits into the street's colour scheme. So ... you know, maybe we could look at a few other options?"

Inappropriate response:

"Sandra, you irascible bitch."

Somewhat inappropriate response:

"Honey, that passive-aggressive Sandra is out here again with an army of tomcats on her heels. They're going bananas. Get the water cannon."

Appropriate response:

"Lovely to see you, Sandra. That's a brilliant suggestion. I would welcome input from you and the rest of the Garage Door Colour Oversight Committee. And come to think of it, as well as choosing the colour for me, you could re-paint the door, cut the grass, trim the hedges and re-pave the driveway. That way, the neighbourhood reaps the aesthetic benefit of a well-kept property, and you finally get an opportunity to work off what you like to call your 'baby weight'. It's a win-win!"



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josh foster

BY LORI A. SWEEZEY – DUNDAS, ON



Joshua Benjamin Foster was born on December 29, 1977 in London, Ontario to Richard and Judy Foster.

One of four siblings, Foster learned the value of a hard days work while growing up on the family farm. Chores in the barn... chores in the fields... these formative years were the foundation for a work ethic that Foster continues to infuse into everything he does.

"Growing up, I enjoyed sports so much. One benefit of life on the farm was that we had a makeshift baseball field, volleyball and basketball courts, and enough siblings to always have two teams. Inevitably the games would end in some sort of strong disagreement between the teams (more commonly known as a brawl)." The siblings remain close to this day... they've just stopped brawling.

"Growing up, I wasn't sure what I wanted to be but I did know that I wanted to work in an office and wear a tie. Ironically, after several years of working in an office and wearing a tie, all I wanted to do was work outside with my hands!"

So, armed with everything from a Business Insurance Diploma, to a Risk Management Designation from U of T, Foster set out to take on the world, but the pull of the outdoors and that whole "working with your hands" thing would not stop taunting him. Off with the tie!!

Helical Piles are now his thing. And although he'd never heard of them before, Foster now finds himself in his third year of employment with **Techno Metal Post** as a supervisor. "We are experiencing incredible growth at **Techno Metal Post** and I look forward to helping the company grow and reach the next level," says Foster.

In his downtime, he enjoys badminton, poker, reading and spending time with his daughter and wife. Golf is also a big passion of Foster's. "It might be nice if I could beat someone at golf someday," he laughs.

Having spent some time in the Canadian Armed Forces, Foster also has a keen interest in WW2 history. "My wife and I plan on taking a trip through Europe to several key battle sites."

When asked about where he sees himself in 10 years from now, Foster seems to have a clear vision of his future. "Running operations for Techno-Metal Post, which (as long as we take care of our customers) should be several times the size we are now. On a personal level, I will probably be living in the same house in Milton, Ont., still playing golf badly, still enjoying time with my family, but hopefully travelling more."

FAVES

FOOD: *Sushi*

MUSIC/BAND: *Matthew Good Band*

PASTIME: *Golf, reading*

TV SHOW/MOVIE: *The Thin Red Line*

BEVERAGE: *Chocolate Milk*

PIECE OF CLOTHING: *Good boots*

TIME OF DAY: *Dawn*

COLOUR: *Green*

PLACE TO TRAVEL: *Florida*

RECIPE // SCALLOP AND CORN CHOWDER

INGREDIENTS:

5 slices of bacon
16 sea scallops
¾ tsp kosher salt
¾ tsp black pepper
1 sm yellow onion (thinly sliced into half moons)
½ lb Yukon gold potatoes (cut into ½ inch cubes)
½ C. dry white wine
1 C. low sodium chicken broth
½ C. heavy cream
1 C. corn
¼ C. parsley (chopped)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Fry bacon until crisp-set aside (leave bacon grease in pan for later)
2. Rinse scallops/pat dry/season w/salt and pepper
3. Turn up heat in the frying pan to med-high
4. Add some scallops to pan (don't crowd them!)
5. Cook until golden brown (2 mins per side) transfer to plate
6. Repeat with remaining scallops
7. Add onion to pan and cook until soft
8. Add potatoes, wine, broth, and cream. Bring to simmer
9. Cover partially and simmer gently until potatoes are tender
10. Add scallops and corn-cook for 4 minutes
11. Serve in a bowl with crumbled bacon and parsley on top

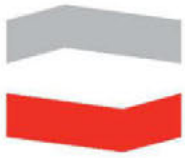


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IN THIS ISSUE

35 PERMACON
A WORLD OF CHOICE

47 ONTARIO STONE SUPPLY
STONE SUPPLY & GARDEN CENTRE

55 GRAND RIVER STONE
PROFESSIONALS TO DIY

109 BE.ON STONE
GO BEYOND STONE

